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Three trumpets sound:
Kagawa, Gandhi, Schweitzer

THREE TRUMPETS SOUND

Kagawa—Gandhi—Schweitzer

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THREE TRUMPETS SOUND

Kagawa—Gandhi—Schweitzer

ALLAN A. HUNTER

author of

YOUTH'S ADVENTURE
SOCIAL PERPLEXITIES
OUT OF THE FAR EAST

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TO

G. C. H. AND S. A. H.

WHO ALSO HOLD THEIR HANDS

"UPLIFTED OVER HATE"

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Three Trumpets Sound

On this high Sierra mountain trail that leads toward the top of the range, where the wind in the pine trees is like wave after wave breaking on an unseen seashore overhead, a woodpecker suddenly rattles a few notes on his drum. The summons half awakens me. Far and high ahead, toward a jagged summit, I see three climbing figures, each carrying a trumpet. Through field glasses I watch, fascinated.

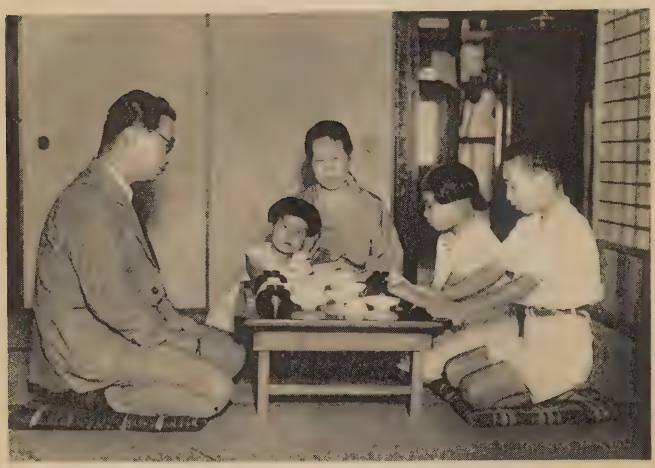
The first is a jolly, bow-legged Japanese with dark spectacles to save his one good eye from the glare of the sun. He wears a cheap black cotton laborer's suit, and shoes that have been scuffed by the Grand Canyon and many other trails. To see him step along you would not guess that again and again he has had to try jiu-jitsu on death; death that ever lurks in blood and vital organs. Frequently the boyish face on the stocky neck turns upward. In delight he drinks in the exhilarating air. He knows that the higher he climbs, the bluer the sky. It may be infinitely remote, but it is also intimately near. He is breathing it. In his lungs it is becoming a part of himself. Through the trumpet Kagawa lifts to his lips, that sharp air suddenly becomes a challenge, triumphant, clear.

Then flash the thin brown legs of a bald, large-eared little Hindu, traveling lighter than the others. All he has on is a white cloth around his waist, and a shawl across his thin shoulders. His bare toes seem to caress the dust of the trail. He is well on in years. His ribs show. He has the gaunt and grizzled look of a veteran whom many battles have scarred. And yet there is a spring in his step as if fatigue were nothing and the heights were everything. When Gandhi sounds his trumpet, peaks from far away reply.

The third man by his dress is evidently a nature-loving Westerner. Over his broad shoulders a haversack is strapped. His hobnail boots crush sparks out of the rocks on the trail. One suspects that the calves of those powerful legs are like iron. His build reminds one of a football tackle; his dark brown moustaches make one think of an East-Side bartender. The blood of this Alsatian moves to a faster rhythm than ours. What is the music high up the mountain that makes him forget the lack of food, the thinness of the air? We had better listen. He may capture it and fling it back to us as only Schweitzer can.

Kagawa, Gandhi, Schweitzer—three trumpeters of God! We have heard of them as record-breaking athletes of the spirit. Yet they are obviously human, suffering the limitations of ordinary flesh and blood. Sometimes one of them will falter far behind. Is the increasing altitude going to be too much for him? He stretches out for a moment in the trail, exhausted. For a moment only. Apparently the purity of that snow shining near the crest intoxicates him. On past the other two he strides. He has won his "second wind." But not for long he leads. Each of the others passes and is passed in turn. Each has his own unique superiorities and special weaknesses. Neither the Hindu nor the Alsatian nor the Japanese can thus far in history be judged supreme. Who can tell which one will outdistance the other?

Turning, they hail to us who are below. No doubt they would like to have us with them on the upper trail. But how they love solitude! Alone but not alone, they walk almost jauntily; as if in lively conversation with some invisible Figure from another world.



Toyohiko Kagawa
Family worship after breakfast

Kagawa

I

DANGEROUS—BUT HE LIKED IT

A CHUBBY graduate student, eagerly crossing the Princeton campus with a small library in his arms, would draw comments like these:

"That Jap sure likes the books!"

"Maybe he'll get there yet."

But the cheerful, bespectacled visitor from across the Pacific whom we innocent seniors were so blindly patronizing had already arrived. During the preceding eight years, this boyish-looking Oriental had smilingly undergone enough to turn his thick hair gray, and had done enough to deserve the applause that the world has recently been showering upon him. What follows in this chapter is only a small part of the story he never mentioned and we never suspected.

He was almost of age and it was the day before Christmas, just the time to launch his great offensive. For the last two years he had been dreaming of little else and now at last he was marching. There was no band to urge him on, but in his mind Dickens' Christmas Carol was singing. Scrooge in that marvelous English tale was conquered by a superior force. Would the enemy in like manner go down before the Japanese Kagawa? Or would death take him first? He was the son of a Samurai! There would be no turning back. If need be, they would find his body by the wall.

Meanwhile his body, this December 24 of 1909, is unromantically hitched to a cart, a cart in which thick quilts like mattresses and bundles of books are neatly packed. Strange weapons for one whose father was close in counsel to the Emperor. The sword of

this young campaigner must have a sharp cutting edge, but where is it? It isn't in evidence, either strapped to his side or among the luggage. Nor does he look very husky. At times he stops pulling, to cough.

He comes to an alley six or seven feet across. The oozing mud is four inches deep. Picking each step, he manages to keep comparatively clean his stockinged feet above the high wooden clogs. In front of a six-by-nine-foot "house," which is one of a score or more such tiny rooms all fastened together in a one-storied row, he unloads his cart. Up the wooden steps he carries his things and arranges them on the floor. This space, three feet by six, will be enough for a kitchen. And the remaining space, six by six, will do for study and rest.

It will be a sleepless first night: not merely because there are bed-bugs, but also because once a man was murdered in this room. Toyohiko, half believing in the possibility of ghosts, nevertheless is determined to sleep the night through here. The room has been rented to him for almost nothing—the neighborhood believes the place is haunted.

And what a neighborhood! Toyohiko Kagawa is an eager student. He likes to analyze situations and understand what goes on about him. During the last few months he has been getting the facts about this famous Shinkawa slum in Kobe. Within ten blocks are perhaps ten thousand people jostling one another day and night; chronic beggars, petty pickpockets, hopeless prostitutes, toughened gangsters, unwanted children, deserted old folks. A few have notches on their swords or pistols. All have flaws in their character. As for their outward condition, however do they stand it? Twenty families have to share a single toilet, and often the overflow makes the street smell like a sewer.

Even though one doesn't put much stock in ghosts, the bed-bugs can keep one humble. They are not only persistent. They are, as the theologians up on the hill would say, omnipresent. No wonder that poor girl down the alley chose suicide to escape. As for the particular kind of rat that makes himself so completely at home, would Saint Francis living in this ramshackle tenement have had the heart to call him "brother"?

A man's fist shakes the paper sliding door. "Come in," calls the new resident of Shinkawa. It is the chief of the gamblers who enters.

"Kagawa, do you want a disciple?"

"How a disciple?"

"Someone to stay with you!"

"Bring him along!"

Copper Statue becomes a member of the family. The neighborhood has named him thus for a reason. His skin has taken on a copper hue from drinking. Too lazy to move, he lacks nothing to make the image complete but a pedestal. It is said that he stands practically motionless, with hands outstretched for coppers, from six in the morning until six at night. His alibi is that when a man is hungry it is no use moving: activity only makes him hungrier. Over and under the same quilts, on the floor, lying beside Kagawa, he snores all night. Next morning, the host finds himself interrupting his preparation of rice over the charcoal brazier. Every few seconds he has to scratch; first his back, then his legs. He bends over to examine the still sleeping Copper Statue. "So that's it!" he mutters to himself. "My guest has given me the itch!" That was about all that the guest did give in return for hospitality that continued for months. No, a few days later, he did offer something else—an idea!

Two other guests have installed themselves. One is an ex-convict (and apparently also a lunatic), who breaks out shrieking five or six times a night in terror of the ghost of the man he has killed. He has come to Kagawa believing that "the teacher" has a miraculous power over spirits, and that he will be safe if he can snuggle up close to his friend. When in the nightmare he starts yelling or trembling, Kagawa reaches for his hand, grasps it firmly and comforts him till he falls back to sleep again. In time he is more or less cured, but he continues to stay on as non-paying guest for several years. The other guest suffers from syphilis. He is so low in the social scale that he is not known by his family name but by the name of the province from which he comes.

But to return to the idea of Copper Statue. The teacher has

very little money; in other words, very little food to share. He gets perhaps eleven yen a month, and by cleaning the chimneys of American homes up on the hill he can earn five or six more. But the total cannot possibly fill the bowls of four grown men. So, instead of cooking the rice in the usual way, into heaps of firm flaky white grains, why not take what little we have and make soup out of it? By going without lunch every day the four of us could have breakfast and supper; and, if we didn't exercise too much, we could survive, so to speak. "Right!" says Kagawa, "We'll try it."

For fifty days they stick to that diet. To the originator of the plan the two diluted meals almost suffice on account of his brilliantly developed technique of conserving energy, but with Kagawa the matter is not so simple. He has to climb the hill every morning on an empty stomach to the American mission college and recite in class. Moreover, he is always poking around in the slums looking for people in trouble. There are times when the aroma of steaming rice in the restaurants that he has to pass makes him ask himself, "Am I going to stick this out?" On those days when Kagawa prays, "Give us this day our daily bread," he does not mumble it mechanically. With him it is a desperate cry.

At last a nurse, hearing of his strange experiment in sharing, gave Kagawa a five yen note for food. He brought back to his three hungry friends plenty of fish and a small mountain of polished rice. They ate till their chopsticks tired!

One day a man handed Kagawa something carefully wrapped in cloth. "A dead baby. Please, will you bury it for me?" The twenty-one year old student had never encountered a situation like this. "But why," he said, trying to hand the bundle back, "why don't you bury it yourself?"

"I haven't the money."

Kagawa had none too much himself. But somehow he raked up five yen. Then he made a small coffin out of an orange crate, did everything else necessary for the pale little body with his own hands, and sincerely offered a prayer in its behalf. During his first year in the slums he attended to the funeral of many babies and in the second year even more. Babies in the Shinkawa often

had a precarious existence. The death rate was terribly high, not only because of the bad sanitation and the abundance of germs, but because of professional carelessness. A furtive mother would hand over an undesired baby to a baby broker with possibly thirty yen for upkeep. He would pocket his fee and farm it out to some struggling family in the slums. Instead of taking care of the baby with the money that the broker had turned over to them, they would probably pass on the victim to another family poorer still, keeping some of the money for themselves. Babies can stand almost anything, but after all they do have to have food, and food was scarce among these depraved or discouraged derelicts of the slums.

Before he realized what was happening Kagawa was becoming a baby undertaker who paid the bills himself. He also became a mother. Answering a summons to appear in the jail, he was taken to a cell by a hard-boiled policeman, who said accusingly, "You know this woman?"

"Yes, I've seen her before."

"Well, she says she's your wife."

"O, no."

"Anyway, this is your baby." And the policeman pointed to a crying infant about three months old. "Take it away," said the policeman, "we can't keep this baby in jail. It hasn't committed any offense." Kagawa did not argue with the jail officials. If he said he was innocent, they wouldn't believe him. If he talked too much, he might get the poor woman into unnecessary trouble: she was in jail on some minor charge but before that she had also committed a crime that, owing to a technicality, would mean a long and useless imprisonment for her if the authorities found out. So out from the jail walked the young bachelor, a little awed, carrying this time a small bundle very much alive.

This baby girl had evidently not been properly fed, and she had a temperature. Kagawa took her to his doctor friend, who prescribed what kind of milk to use and what medicine to give. But there was much that the doctor did not know about babies that Kagawa was destined soon to find out. The first night passed almost peacefully. The incorrigible orphan boy, the unrecon-

structed rag picker, the nervous beancurd peddler, the moody dockyard laborer, and the old couple enjoying Kagawa's hospitality had, so far as the baby was concerned, a quiet night.

When with the morning Kagawa contemplated the tiny sleeping figure curled up on the two bamboo chairs, he had a few bad moments. These men were too clumsy to take care of Ishii. The elderly woman staying here had never had a child, and she was afraid to touch this one. Would he carry it on his back up the hill to school? But that would make too much of a disturbance among his facetious classmates. There was an experienced woman down the alley; maybe she would act as mother during the day. She did. But that night little Ishii became vocal. Six or seven times Kagawa had to cool her head and change her clothes. Once the dockyard worker grumbled hoarsely from his comfortable place on the floor, "Kill the brat!" So Kagawa carried Ishii in his arms up and down, up and down in the alley, soothing her. The next night also was sleepless, and it was hot. The bed-bugs seemed more active than usual. When the clock struck one and Kagawa was holding her in his lap, strange thoughts assailed him. Here was this beautiful gift from God, with the fever-flushed cheeks and rosebud mouth, an angel of purity in the midst of dirty murder and the concentrated filth of the world. Some day he and Ishii, he dreams, will stride together across the mountain tops looking up at the snow-white clouds and down at the azure inland sea. But just now her pulse is hardly beating and she is still as death. Perhaps she will not live. How cruel! This little thing has had love for only two days. If there is a God who cares, could he let her slip away like this? She must not die. She must not be denied her chance to be loved. And if she does go, how can she be buried? There is no money in the house now. The tears pour down Kagawa's cheeks. They splash upon the delicate eyelashes of the child and awaken her. The frail little body does not stir. But she opens her eyes and the cry of Kagawa's heart is answered.

Four months later the real mother of Ishii—not the one who had been in jail—is discovered and the two are reunited.

Unmentionable insects have been mentioned. A great man, so a psychologist suggests, is one who treats such problems not as

a terror but as a challenge. Kagawa took them as a challenge. First, of course, he scratched, just as the rest of us would. Then he studied the habits of these creatures. It appeared that they liked to rendezvous and hide in holes. Punching holes in many blocks of wood, Kagawa circled his bed with them. He had read of an Englishman living among the poor as he was doing, who used always to keep a light burning in his home as an invitation for anyone in trouble to come to the door, no matter how late it might be at night. Kagawa, accordingly, kept the electric light on all night. When someone outside would shriek or a cat would wake him up, that was the time to begin the experiment that he had worked out as a sort of game. He would pick up a needle, shake one of the blocks over a piece of paper and as the bed-bugs would drop out he would, with the help of the light already shining, see how many he could impale. Fifty was a good average. On one hot summer night he scored ninety. This sport had its merits, but it was not very effective in protecting the sportsman. Kagawa finally developed a plan that enabled him to ignore the intruders for most of the night. He placed mosquito netting under as well as over himself. Those that got on the inside he could handle, one at a time.

Epidemics were spawning in the slums most of the time. Lice caused typhus to break out; rats multiplied the black plague. Cholera, dysentery, and small pox worked their ugly way through the alleys. Next-door neighbors died of these diseases, but Kagawa stayed on, doing what he could for the sick. For some strange reason these epidemics passed him by.

The disease most trying to him was intestinal tuberculosis. (He himself still had tuberculosis of the lungs.) The odor becomes almost unendurable. Once he found a woman suffering from intestinal tuberculosis. She had fainted and no one wanted to touch her. Kagawa brought her to his home and cared for her as if he were an expert nurse. A neighbor boy was dying of this terrible disease. Kagawa took him in.

Someone reported to him the desperate case of a sick woman living alone in an untended hut. Kagawa hurried to the place. It was a sort of chicken coop, and the woman obviously was un-

able to take care of herself. Kneeling, he somehow got her up on his back and panted home with his burden. There he washed her dirty body and clothes. She seemed to be suffering from the noisome dread disease, but his doctor friend thought otherwise. After months of treatment in Kagawa's house (which by this time had been enlarged by the rental of three or four rooms used as hospital, free lodging house, and chapel), she became much better.

When Kagawa got married and brought his bride to his overcrowded home, this not very bright but steadily recuperating woman was still there. But Mrs. Kagawa seemed not to mind. She was as anxious to serve as was her husband. One thing was sure: with such a household and husband she could never have time to be bored. In addition to the sick woman with the idiot's smile, there was an old economically helpless couple, a mother with several children whom he had just taken in, and others making up a company about ten in number.

How Kagawa and Haruko came to be engaged is a romance combining the brisk modernity of the West with the charming antiquity of the East. Haruko means "Springtime." She worked in a bookbindery, and faithfully attended when off duty the services Kagawa conducted in his small slum chapel. One cannot imagine Gandhi or even Schweitzer writing so revealingly of a girl as Kagawa writes of Haruko, and his other near-sweethearts, in one of his autobiographical novels. Haruko, it seems, was not so skilled in the social graces as Kohide, who used to come down to the slums to see him; nor was she so flowerlike as the little outcaste Tamae, whose shadowlike love for him stirred his sense of beauty. Frankly, it was for a time hard for the young man to make up his mind. Never had he pressed a maiden to his heart, so timid was he. But for all his burning desire to be pure, he had no interest in being an ascetic forever. Haruko was healthy; but, confessed Kagawa, she was also a little stout. But Kagawa was not to mill around in this quandary for long. Haruko came to him one day when he was ill in bed. Her problem was this: her family wanted her to marry a certain teacher who had made the conventional approaches through a middleman. Moreover,

Haruko was about twenty-five years old, and her marriageable age was passing. What should she do? "If God finds me of any use in helping the poor people in the slums, I should be willing to spend all my life here. That is what I wanted to consult you about."

The only other person present was the half-wit, so they continued the interview without embarrassment. Haruko firmly stated that, if there was a vacant room somewhere in the slums, she could come and live there. Her family wouldn't object. She had saved a little money, and with that she could earn enough to pay for her food. On the other hand, it might be better for her to take her father's advice and marry the school teacher even if she hadn't yet seen him. Then she asked if there was any reason why she should not come to live with Kagawa.

"To live with me?"

"Yes, as a servant. I'll work well. I don't want any wages or anything if you'll give me my food." Her eyes were intelligent. Her faced glowed.

This was not a proposal; it only left the way open. In the back of his mind Kagawa had long entertained the thought that perhaps it was not right to ask any woman to be his wife and share the sufferings he intended never to dodge. But this girl had a strong will. He liked her mind and the way she used words. She would prove a real comrade for his Quest.

He broke the ice: "You think of coming to live in Shinkawa. I'm afraid people would talk about it and that it would cause a lot of gossip if we lived together. If you come to live here you must make up your mind to marry me."

She blushed and protested that she had not nearly the position or education that "the teacher" had. Kagawa reached for her hand, which was resting on the matted floor. The tears that flooded his eyes he tried to hide under the bedclothes.

When he was able to get up a few days later, they made an agreement. They would meet at the beach at six in the morning and make their decision. Kagawa was there before sunrise, and she was there waiting, cheeks full of life and hair beautifully arranged. Yes, she loved him and he loved her.

"We shall get married at once," he said.

"You and I? If you care for me I would be willing to lay down my life for you." There on the beach as they kissed each other, the sun broke through the mist and illumined them. That partnership had a tested and increasing glory. The wife, mother of three children, has well been named Springtime, as Kagawa admits: "With her I live always in the beauty, strength, and marvel of the Spring."

But not all of Shinkawa responded to the love that sang always in Kagawa's heart. Again and again he faced instant death at the point of pistol and sword. It was then that the metal in him became radiant. Over a sick child this young crusader might give the impression of being tender but lacking in strength. Looking straight into the eyes of a murderer who was quite willing to thrust the sword home once more, Kagawa could stand his ground with the clean-cutting and blazing sword of the spirit. There was a desperado a few doors away who used to get wildly drunk. Even when partly sober he was a bully. When Kagawa set up in his tiny room a cheap desk on which he hoped to write fiction and thus make some money for his slum work, this man shook the desk and asserted that he would keep it shaking all day long unless the writer gave him two yen. Kagawa reduced the price and let him have one yen. On another occasion, half drunk, he asked Kagawa for money. Kagawa refused. His neighbor, whom he had befriended times without number, gave him a smashing blow on the mouth, breaking four teeth and probably cracking the upper jaw. "That's why," Kagawa twits American audiences, "I don't speak good English. I had four teeth knocked out and the false ones put in by a Japanese dentist don't have a very good American accent." Nothing daunted, Kagawa continued to show love toward that gangster. In return, he later attacked Kagawa once more; this time with a sword. Liquor had made him literally mad. Kagawa, fully aware of what was likely to happen, asked the people near who were shouting, "Don't hurt the teacher," to get out of the way. He knew how deadly that old sword of his neighbor was but he would have nobody but himself involved in this struggle.

Calmly he stood there, one foot in front of the other. Was it the old fencing posture he had been taught as a boy? But this was a different kind of fencing. He must not smile or speak; that would only make the attacker all the angrier. But he could look into the other's eyes. At any second the sword might be thrust. But he was not afraid. For ten minutes he outwilled the man who had the physical force on his side. At the end of the ten minutes his opponent slunk away, his sword grasped like a foolish toy.

2

IRON BEATEN INTO STEEL

How DID the steel in Kagawa get its temper? How did he win the vision and strength to throw himself on Christmas eve into the worst slums of his country and stay there not for one year only but for ten years and more?

Probably the best answer comes from his own lips, although the words were intended in a totally different connection. Incidentally, these self-revealing sentences were among the first that Mrs. Kagawa heard from the lips of the student who was later to become her husband. It was a hot summer morning. He was speaking at a meeting where she worked. In a steel factory near by there was the rhythmic clangor of metal against metal.

"Listen," cried Kagawa, pointing to the window, "Listen to those hammers beating out the iron. First the metal is heated red hot, then plunged into cold water, then beaten and beaten and beaten. At last it turns out steel. Had it not gone through this process it would never have been anything but iron."

Had Toyohiko Kagawa not gone through the process he did, how would he have turned out? Would he have become the world-famous but compromising diplomat his rich uncle wanted him to be? Or a soaringly successful statesman like his father, whose vices would crash him to the ground as the weasel brings down the careless eagle? Nobody knows. All we know is that he was heated red hot, then beaten, then beaten yet again, until

there was a blade strong and fine enough to cut its way through the almost hopeless inertia of Japan's worst slums, with a gallantry of suffering shared and fellowship freely offered such as only a few in all history, such as Father Damien and Saint Francis of Assisi, could match.

The boy must have been exceptionally good material in the first place. His father climbed to the rank of secretary of the emperor's privy council, a position comparable in importance to cabinet minister. He was head man of nineteen villages and had helped launch two steamship companies. The mother came from a slum family pathetically poor, so poor that the girl was sold as a geisha and later became the concubine (not the wife) of Kagawa's father. This fact does not necessarily imply a weak heredity on the mother's side. A loyal Japanese girl, she had such devotion for her parents that she was willing to subordinate her own future to the welfare of her family: thanks to her sacrifice they could have rice.

The child was conspicuously bright. When at the age of four his parents died and he was transferred to the care of his father's legal wife, it was not many months before he was in school learning to read and write. Owing to the prestige of his family, he was allowed to enter school before the usual time. The boy's possibilities, however, seemed to mean nothing to the foster mother. Here he was, a constant reminder of her failure as a wife. She hated him as the son of her enemy, and her own mother reinforced her bitterness. Together they beat the lad, and found other ways of punishing him.

Like every child he wanted love at home more than anything else. But the jealous women saw to it that, so far as they could arrange it, he would be blocked. Desperately lonely, the boy would slip off on long hikes along the river bottom a few hundred yards away. His passion to be answered with affection had to be satisfied. The method he used may cause a smile but it was no trivial matter to the frustrated child. When spring came, he found in the grass a nest of blue eggs with brown dots. Day by day he would await developments. When the four or five young ones were old enough he would take the place of the mother lark

and feed them. Somehow or other the nestlings survived. With a peasant boy somewhat older than himself he enjoyed what must have been a deep and sincere friendship. They would fish together or stand in the mud up to their hips tending the young rice plants. From his peasant friend, Toyohiko must have learned something of that sympathy with the poor that is his peculiar gift.

There is probably nothing more important in a growing personality than hunger. This boy was appetite incarnate. He craved not only knowledge and comradeship but goodness, sheer goodness. And there was reason for his sense of need. The father had caused a good deal of grief by the way of life that he had chosen. The older brother was rapidly wasting away the fortune on concubines, liquor, and gambling. This older brother gave the boy permission to leave the straggling cottages of the now dwindling estate to try his luck at school in town. Some of the upper classmen there were shockingly immoral. This only added fuel to the fire in Kagawa to go straight as an arrow and be clean, like a mountain stream. He pored over intricate Chinese characters beautifully brushed on rice paper, praising the ideal virtues of the polite Confucian gentleman. But never could he find anyone who satisfactorily embodied the qualities of character on which his child's heart was set.

Then a new chemical was added to the red-hot iron. At about the age of fourteen he asked his brother if he might take English lessons from an American teacher who was giving them free to Japanese students. Would he have to study along with the English language that foreign Bible? He would? Then let him never be taken in by foreign religious doctrines. He must stick to Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shintoism. Those three were enough for Japan.

At this stage the boy's soul was blazing hot. He had a consuming desire to live on a level higher than his family or teachers had exemplified. But did he have the power? And was life worth continuing anyway? Maybe life was nothing more than the big fish swallowing the smaller ones and men proving their descent from the monkeys by acting more cruelly than their dis-

tant ancestors. The boy was plunged into the deepest disillusionment and pessimism—cold water!

Quite possibly we are reading into the picture greater extremes of temperature than were actually there. On the other hand, this young genius' ardors and frustrations may have been deeper than his fragmentary reminiscences suggest. The point is that, at the age of fourteen, he was ready for that pounding needed to turn him into steel of most delicate but enduring structure.

His older American friend realized that this young student, eager to read anything he could lay hands on, was spiritually groping in the dark. For one thing he had a twisted attitude toward nature. It was not so dark or terrible as Toyohiko imagined. As Gandhi was told by his tutor to make the beatitudes a part of his blood, so Kagawa was urged to understand Jesus' reference to the lilies of the field. Let him memorize that verse and enter into its meaning. The young Japanese took the dare. Then it came to him: If God could make the lilies beautiful, why could he not make Kagawa the kind of person he wanted to be? Months later the American cross-examined him. Did he believe in God? Yes. Did he believe in prayer? Yes. Then why not be baptized? Coming out in the open that way was a different matter from praying. You see, night after night under the bed clothes where none of the relatives could see or hear, a fellow could pray, "O God, make me a great man like Christ."

But being baptized meant all sorts of penalties. He was living with his uncle, reputed to be the richest man in the province. This uncle wanted his promising nephew to go to the Imperial University, where he would study to be a diplomat. Undoubtedly he would inherit the uncle's fortune. If he became a Christian, it would be good-bye money, good-bye position, good-bye family, good-bye about everything he had been brought up to value. But let us hear the conclusion of this part of his story in Kagawa's own occasionally quaint English.

" 'Kagawa,' said Dr. Myers, 'you are a timid and cowardly boy.'

"I didn't like those adjectives so I got baptized."

His uncle cut him off without a sen. The American missionary did what he could, but from now on Kagawa was to be mercilessly pounded by poverty. Not even odd jobs cleaning chimneys brought in enough to drive away the pangs of literal hunger.

When he was seventeen and studying at a school in Tokyo, he passed through another test with flags flying. The Russo-Japanese war was going on at full blast; and a patriot, so everybody seemed to think, was a man who believed in killing as many on the other side as possible. Kagawa did not think that way. From the platform before assembled students he unhesitatingly declared that all mass-murder, including the mass-murder of Russians, was wrong. Did not Jesus tell us to love our enemies and pray for them? That night fellow students lured him to the baseball field.

"So the war ought to be stopped, eh? Take that, you coward!" "What would you have us do, let the Russians march in and take our country away from us? You traitor!" The slaps and blows were not easy for a red-blooded young man to take, especially for a son of a Samurai, who as a boy had enjoyed using his fists. But he stood by his principle without wincing, and his calm answer was a devastating one: "Father, forgive them." Years later, some of those theological students who had attacked their schoolmate, asked his pardon, frankly admitting that at the time they had not known what they were doing.

The test of tests, however, came two years later. During a summer vacation he stopped off at a fishing town on a strange expedition. In the busy streets of that town the boyish figure could continually be seen, rain or shine, earnestly addressing the passersby. One evening while it was raining, the nineteen-year-old youth felt his body swaying. For a week his voice had been getting weaker and now he felt horribly cold. He knew that he was ill, but he also knew that he must not give in. "I tell you," he cried as if he were sharing to intimate friends the deepest thing in his heart: "God is love, and I will affirm God is love till I fall. Where there is love, God and life reveal themselves."

Somehow he managed to stumble back to the cheap room where he slept, and went to bed. For perhaps two days he lay there, coughing and spitting up blood. He had no money to call in a

doctor. But at last someone arranged for a doctor to come. It was a case of tubercular pneumonia, apparently a hopeless case. The boy was almost too weak to cough. It was hard even to breathe.

"He can't possibly live," he overheard the doctor saying downstairs. But the doctor was unfamiliar with Kagawa's fighting spirit.

One morning he fasted and prayed in a special way. For days there had been running through his brain the confidence that he was needed to help the poor people in the slums of Shinkawa, in the city of Kobe. "If I get well," he said to himself again and again, "I will enter those slums and offer myself there as a sacrifice for the poor." This was not a bargain for health with the Almighty, but a pledge of service.

Early in the afternoon it looked as if the life were slipping out of him, he lay so still. But under the sheets this sick youth was summoning all the power that was in and around him. As the afternoon sun entered the room, lighting up the pillar on which his attention for many minutes had been fastened, it was as if he himself were becoming incandescent. On one side were darkness and death. On the other side were light and life. And between the two was a clean-cut line. Across that line he took a leap and landed in "the world of miracle and mystery."

From that moment, he began to recover. Soon he had the strength to cough and he could breathe almost with freedom. The doctor was surprised when he paid his next visit. He had really expected this ill-nourished young intellectual to die. Kagawa remained in bed for a month, but during those days he had a good time, reading the Psalms. Ever since he has had what he calls "a good time." Not once has he been frightened nor for any length of time become discouraged. He has been attacked innumerable times with pistol and sword, badly injured in a streetcar accident, jailed, pronounced temporarily blind with the chance of being permanently unable to see, startled again and again with sudden hemorrhages, but ever since crossing that death-line, without any prolonged interruption he has found himself walking in the light.

When the summer vacation was over and he could be active again, Kagawa studied at the theological seminary at Kobe. In his spare time he went down to the slums of Shinkawa. There he would plant himself in the streets among the gamblers, beggars, pickpockets, boy gangsters, prostitutes, and pimps, continuing his story of the love and grace of God. Only his strength was insufficient. His American friends sent him to a hospital for several weeks. Then he set out to a fishing village in an effort to build himself up. Renting a fisherman's house for fifty cents a month, he did his own cooking and lived on the barest necessities. For a time he was almost a hermit. Spiders and cats were his friends. Soon he was reading to the illiterate villagers letters from a distant son or daughter, and joining them on their hazardous all-night fishing trips.

The people loved him. Every two weeks or so they would come to the local candy shop to hear him speak of the weird wonder of being alive and walking on the other side of the shadows.

There was music in this youth that could not be kept to himself. When no companions were about, he would write with a brush on discarded newssheets and magazines the narrative of his own experiences. He was too poor to buy writing paper. That pastime, however, of expressing what was on his heart, was not a waste of time.

One day his American friend came to see him. Kagawa anxiously asked him, "Dr. Myers, have you brought along any bedding?"

"No, Toyohiko, I'll sleep with you."

"But aren't you afraid of catching my disease?"

"I don't need to be afraid of anything."

Kagawa's other friends were afraid, but not this missionary. Nobody else seemed willing to come so close to his diseased body. The youth was deeply moved by this foreigner's eagerness to identify himself with a penniless, sick friend. "I resolved," he now tells American audiences, "to love the slum people with the same love that he had shown to me."

In the fishing village Kagawa had the leisure to brood over his plan, and the stiff discipline of living on a minimum taught him

much about depending only on his own resources. There were nights beside that seashore when, in his fevered imagination, a vast and menacing black beast seemed to rise out of the deep to assail his soul and try his mettle. In such moments he had to draw on every ounce of courage and spirit he could discover within, to drive off that specter of defeat. But out of it all he proved to himself that he could carry on in a small rented room costing but a few sen a month, with the simplest food.

Back in Kobe after a year of convalescence, this youth, now come of age, has won his spurs. He is set for his shining adventure, "to seek, to find, and not to yield." Just a year more for me to live? My body can't last longer than that? Well, then, that year will be placed where it can count for most! I fling it into the Shinkawa slums!

But Kagawa, as we have already seen, becomes so busy with the people there that he forgets to die.

3

BEST SAMARITAN

An American undergraduate, anxious to make his life count, came to Kagawa for counsel. "If you were in my place," he asked, "what kind of work would you prepare yourself for?"

"Science."

The student was puzzled with this answer. How did it happen that a religious leader whose passion was social justice would make such a recommendation? Several months later he had another chance at the Japanese visitor. What had he really meant?

"I meant," Kagawa replied, "that the world needs social engineers."

Kagawa started out in the Shinkawa slums as a Good Samaritan. During the three attacks on his community of bubonic plague, three of dysentery, five of cholera, and an almost annual scourge of typhus, to mention some of the most obvious diseases that pounced like jungle beasts upon his slum friends, he washed

their bodies; and gave them medicine, food, and the feeling of being wanted and loved. On the floor of his six-by-nine-foot room a visitor unaccustomed to the raw edge of life might be shocked to find a morphine addict and beside him a drunkard, both dead to the world; a light-fingered orphan boy reluctantly sweeping the floor, whom Kagawa was trying to save from becoming a gangster; in the "hospital" next door a horribly diseased prostitute about to die; and an old man coughing his lungs away. All at one time he had four murderers living with him. He played with children half blind from syphilis or trachoma. If ever there was a laboratory for a Good Samaritan to work in, here it was!

But inexorably the researcher found himself forced by bitter experience to become a social engineer. Being a Good Samaritan, picking up groaning victims at the side of the road and sympathetically paying the hospital bill were not sufficiently constructive. It was necessary to be a Best Samaritan, and to remove the causes of violence and exploitation from which these roadside victims suffered. In other words, a cement highway had to be built in place of the old murderous Jericho Road. And he would have to get jobs for the misguided adventurers up in the mountain fastnesses who had been making travel dangerous. Maybe they or their children could be re-educated. Maybe they could be employed in policing the new highway!

Or, to put it another way, if the water-tap was causing an overflow in the washbasin, wasn't it feeble-minded to keep on tamely bailing it out with a dipper? The sane thing was to turn off the tap. There must be something in these slums or outside corresponding to the running tap that a fellow could get his fingers on, so that the murders, drinking, gambling and exploitation of women could be dried up at the source. That was the problem that continually haunted his mind.

Less than four years after that Christmas venture into Shinkawa, the twenty-five or fifty dollars a month that he had been receiving half the time from an American friend to support his charity work, stopped short. He had to make new plans. Why not go to the United States and study the American way of doing things? He and Haruko had been married about two years. She

could continue her studies at a school in Yokohama. It would be a sharp break; but in the long run it might mean more for the slum people if he got fresh light on his problem and theirs. Just as the World War was breaking out, he sailed.

The Princeton Theological Seminary gave him a scholarship. From before dawn till after midnight he would work on the courses in mathematics, psychology, zoology, and paleontology he took as extras in the university a half-mile away. He also wrote a thesis for his degree at the seminary. Once a week he had enough to eat when the president's wife invited him to dinner. Most or many of his other meals economically consisted of milk and shredded wheat biscuits. After Shinkawa's mosquitoes and other intruders it all seemed like a dream. During summer vacation he ate like a king, employed as servant on a wealthy estate —for a few weeks. But sentiment got the better of him. Early in the morning, eager to see the dew on the grass, he opened a window to jump outside, and off went the burglar alarm. On another occasion he lost a pleasant job by absent-mindedly sprinkling soda instead of salt on somebody's egg.

At the end of his second and last year in Princeton he was in New York watching a parade of needle-work strikers. It was a hot August day. For an hour and a half they marched past, sixteen abreast, carrying banners announcing "We want bread." There was something appealing in the eyes of those Italians, Syrians, Bohemians, and Jews. They appeared like sheep being driven along the highway. As he stood on the pavement looking over these thousands of poor workers who were making demands of their four hundred and fifty tailor-employers, the tears rolled down his face and he became excited over the light that flashed upon him. "How useless to talk of 'relief'! There is nothing for the worker to do but trust to his own strength. When I return to Japan I will preach the formation of labor unions."

In Chicago the old cough returned. If he had to die, let it be in Japan. But he did not have money for the fare home. In Ogden, Utah, where he thought the climate would help his lungs, he got a job as secretary of a Japanese society. After a few months he built up a union of combined white and Japanese tenant

families. Under his leadership they won a strike, which increased the earnings of the members from five dollars a ton for sugar beets to eleven dollars. In gratitude the successful strikers presented him with a gift of one hundred dollars, enough to take him home.

"The hero," says George Bernard Shaw, "is a man who prevents." Kagawa was now dedicated to the heroism that goes to the bottom of economic distress to prevent it. Returning to the old house in the Kobe slums, he was struck with the futility of merely trying to pull this individual out of the fire and that one out of the sewer. Into those strenuous years among the broken and disinherited he had poured the reddest blood of his life. With what result? Before he left, the police could point to fewer crimes. There were decidedly less murdering and gambling. The old man who had stayed with him had given up drinking. Something like eighty persons had joined his movement and for a time had tried to act as Christians. But while he was gone the old suction of the slums proved too much for many of them. Of the promising youngsters that had attended his Sunday school, a saddening number of boys were now practised pickpockets, and some of the girls he had baptized had been sold as prostitutes. The old cry of "Murder!" could now be heard in the crime-spawning tenements.

What was the origin of all this evil against which his individual action seemed so helpless? Was not economic despair among the fundamental forces that were brutally pulling these friends of his down? And would it not have to be attacked with collective action? He would do what he could to remove that economic despair, scientifically, collectively.

All these years in the slums Kagawa had been making a careful study of poverty, using Shinkawa as a laboratory. His findings he put in a pamphlet. The next job was to get it read by the right people and then acted upon. In time the House of Peers became so stirred by his dramatic exposure of conditions in the slums that they circulated this pamphlet and then passed an amazing piece of legislation. As a result, about ten million dollars were voted

for tearing down the old rat-infested buildings in six cities and putting in their place decent houses with sanitary facilities.

But the young social reformer could never get out of his head that eye-opening procession in New York. Rebuilding the slums was not enough. The workers had first of all to win for themselves justice and self-respect. One of his jobs was therefore to organize and educate them.

Not far from where he lived were wage-earners who were often treated by their employers as less worth-while than the machines they tended. Frequently he would go down to meet them early in the morning, to talk and pray with them before the day's work. These laborers must stand on their own feet and have "the glory of the lighted mind." Acting on this decision he started what was probably the first labor newspaper in Japan.

He knew where the workers lived, and he had the gift of writing in terms that were real and vital to their needs. He conducted a night school for the workers. Several pupils from this school became candidates for governmental offices; a few became representatives in the Osaka Assembly. It was technically illegal to organize a labor union but Kagawa organized one all the same—said to be the first in Japan—and, like a football coach, he trained its members to make the proper forward passes. Close by were the dockyards employing thirty thousand workers. If those workers simply folded their arms and refused to do any work, they might persuade their employers to give them better wages, better hours, and better working conditions, and also the recognition of their union. But, insisted Kagawa, there should be no violence. Sometimes they sat or stood before the machines without lifting a finger. At last they marched out in a great procession. Thanks in part to Kagawa's efforts among the Kobe merchants, tons of ice were donated for ice-water to the strikers marching down the main streets of the harbor city. Kagawa was not actually the leader, but as "advisor" he probably exerted more influence than the laborer who had been officially elected as head.

At one critical moment, believers in violence boring from within almost wrecked the movement; but he stepped in and saved an excited mob from violence and defeat. He himself was struck

by a policeman's saber and dragged off to jail. But practically no blood was shed, and the non-violent tactics of the workers, coupled with Kagawa's outstanding leadership, won them at least a partial victory. The publicity had been immense. While Kagawa was in prison, the second instalment of his best-selling autobiography was published. Loyal citizens of the Empire one morning stood in long lines before the bookseller's shops waiting for the doors to open so that they might get copies. It is said that the conscience of the nation was aroused in behalf of the dock-yard workers who were demanding the right to be treated not as machines but personalities. Stepping out of jail, Kagawa did not stop with a single union. He went on to organize or help organize the Western Federation of Labor in Japan. At one time he was president of a labor union of fifteen thousand government workers.

Kagawa might be gentle as Saint Francis of Assisi, he might be a crime-reducer in the alleys of Shinkawa; but along the dock-yards and in the factories the police now considered him "dangerous." Detectives constantly shadowed him. "Young men," he once said to a group of American students, "like to be followed by detectives." From his own experience he ought to know. One afternoon he was having a cup of tea with a friend up on the hill. But he did not stay long. Pressing him for the reason for his early departure his hostess was amused to hear that it was raining and therefore "it wouldn't be kind to my detective to keep him waiting. He has to wait outside, and might catch cold." Through the window she observed the two going off arm in arm.

His relations with the authorities, as we have already seen, were not always so pleasant. Because of a certain sentence published under his name, Kagawa was arrested and brought up before the judge.

"Did you write that 'A laborer is greater than a king'?" demanded the important one.

"Yes, I did."

"What do you mean by such a treasonable statement?"

"I mean that a laborer can build a house but a King is just a King."

The young author was fined a hundred yen. Kagawa was with

Tolstoi in the belief that intellectuals and socialites have no right to stand on the backs of those who produce, purring in unconscious parasitism.

But it was not enough to educate and organize the workers standing before the machines. Industrial families who were all used up might drift into the slums and sink lower and lower, but another and possibly even more basic source of degradation was the condition of the neglected farmers. As a boy he had had peasant playmates, visited in their huts, and from them had learned much of their sufferings. Out among the Utah beetfields he had had the chance to get at the roots of their situation, and now that he had the reputation of being ready to go to jail to help the poor, the farmers came to him with their problems. The trouble was they were tenants (that is, they did not own their own farms), and the landlords took more than half the grain that their hands planted and reaped in the fields. One result was that their debts kept piling up and crushing their spirits. The other result was that gradually but inevitably they were being driven to the slums. A desperate village father would hold a family council. How pay the rent? The only way out that he could see was: sell the prettiest daughter into prostitution. Her filial sacrifice would at least keep the others alive. So seventeen-year-old Tamura slips down the social ladder that at last lands her helpless and broken in one of the twisted alleys back of Kagawa's room.

Or, an ambitious boy hears from a smooth-tongued agent of the wonderful wages offered by the factories down in the big city. Why not sign a contract and thus assist the family? And wouldn't there be motion pictures? But the promises of the agent and the actual working conditions somehow seem to have no connection. Sanko develops tuberculosis in the moist, lint-laden factory air. He has no way of getting home. The suction of Shinkawa takes him in.

To attack the slums by cutting off their supply of recruits thus becomes one of Kagawa's chief enthusiasms. But to be of any use he has first to get the facts. His laboratory, beginning with a

room six feet by nine, now takes in ten thousand farming villages.

Surveying the situation as accurately as he can, he sets about to train young leaders who intimately know the neat little fields and who have a stake in helping the tenant farmers to own their own farms and improve their condition. A likely young villager Kagawa invites to his home. Day after day he shares with this visitor his vision of reconstructed villages. At the same time he trains him in the technique of organizing the peasants to get free of debt. Somebody has to write vivid first-hand stories about the farmers' situation. Why not this young man? Kagawa teaches him how to use his pen. A rich young Count whom he has interested in the growing movement throws in his influence. In time they launch a big national union combining the scattered little local unions that had been ineffectively struggling for a fairer share of Japan's crops. Kagawa does not spare himself. Within a few years he has invested in this effort to save the farmers something like ten thousand yen earned as royalties from his writings. So skilful is he at making the farmers live in the public imagination through stories published in magazines and books, that their very poverty becomes a source of income with which to abolish it.

To understand the pressure of that poverty, Americans must remember that the total area of Japan proper is less than that of California. Furthermore, owing to the mountains and lava that seem to be everywhere, only one out of six or seven acres of that small area is under cultivation. In other words, the farmer has his back to the wall—a wall of volcanic rock. Organizing the farmers into unions had therefore to be supplemented with more intelligent methods of agriculture plus political action. For this job another disciple of Kagawa, young Sugiyama, proved to be just the right person. During many years Sugiyama, collaborating with friends of Kagawa, did spade work among the villages, helping them organize; but also giving them cards with Bible verses on one side and on the other side practical instructions as to how to make two blades of rice grow where only one grew before. Then, partly with the aid of Kagawa's whirlwind stump

speaking, he was elected to the House of Commons in Tokyo. His aim there was, and is, to protect the underprivileged farmers with legislation covering their needs. When, early in 1936, army fascists made an attempt on the government in Tokyo, they may have been registering their protests against the election, a few days previously, of such liberals to the House of Commons as Sugiyama.

Is it possible that those fascists sensed the threat to their system, embodied in Sugiyama and other ballot-winning colleagues of Kagawa? If so, they sensed aright. These liberals do menace the god-of-things-as-they-are. For underneath the political pressure and the organizing of unions that Kagawa sometimes initiates and always encourages, is a movement with terrifying possibilities. On one day it may appear weak as a single grain of wheat. But suppose that grain got under the old, smooth cement surface and then began to grow! Suppose it reached its tendrils and roots out to the power of the sun and the air and the soil! Some day the whole solid structure of militarism and imperialism might crack.

In India, Gandhi shook the British Empire with his quickly marshalled non-co-operation movement. In Japan, Kagawa, patiently as a Burbank, experimenting with all sorts of surprising co-operatives, would everywhere wipe out the empire of the overprivileged.

The significance of the co-operative idea did not come to him suddenly. It grew through many difficult years. And today he finds it promising an undramatic but vital revolution demanding the reddest blood of his veins.

4

THE GREAT CONTAGION

THE CO-OPERATIVE idea is not difficult to understand, though it is sometimes difficult to promote. To use a phrase of Mary P. Follett, it means "Power *with* people" instead of "Power *over*

people." It means voluntary teamwork, in which nobody on the team exploits or is exploited.

In his Shinkawa laboratory Kagawa came to the conclusion that this idea that is behind the democracy he desires for Japan has to be put to work in economic relations, in the eating and baking of bread, in buying and selling. Otherwise there will be no assurance of world peace; and some he fears will starve while others of us will become parasites.

One of the most successful techniques for the co-operative idea was hit upon by accident nearly a hundred years ago. Desperation brought together twenty-eight undernourished workers in a weaving mill at Rochdale, England, and horse sense drove them to pool the equivalent of a nickel a week until they accumulated enough cash to buy their own flour, oatmeal, butter, and sugar. Out of this, a store and a program developed. Today over the world more persons are using the co-operative technique than there are citizens in the United States. The principles are simple. For example, if you join a consumers' co-operative, it matters not how rich or poor you are: you have one vote. At the end of, say six months, the accountant figures up how much money the store has made. The profit is distributed among consumers. It goes back to you and the other customers, and the amount that is returned to you is in proportion to the amount you have spent in purchases in the store. Of course, a percentage of that amount may be given to the educational work—if the customer-members so vote. There is no speculation. Whatever money is lent to the co-operative draws a modest interest.

Kagawa began his first consumers' co-operative following the Rochdale plan a year after he first returned from America. It started humbly; but it spread, as anything real is likely to do. Before long some of the members were wearing a special suit made in, by, and for the co-operatives. It was called "the Kagawa suit." The summer edition consisting of light but durable black cloth cost about $1.65; the heavier winter corduroy vest, pants, and coat cost less than $4.00. In one month, more than three thousand of these cheap suits were sold through the various branch stores. Towels also were thus distributed. On each one there was im-

printed a cartoon representing Moses leading the children of Israel across the Red Sea away from Egypt—a genteel reminder that by drying yourself with this co-operative towel, you, too, were being led out of economic slavery.

Nearly twenty years before Kagawa built up his first unit, there were credit, consumers', and producers' co-operatives in Japan with thousands of members. But the management was not sufficiently democratic. The needs of the poorer tenant farmers were not met. Kagawa's co-operatives were different: they helped the very poor help themselves. In a few years the government recognized his method as the model one. Today, the members of co-operative societies that he sponsors number many thousands.

These co-operative societies are not just so many organizations. They are carriers of the Great Contagion. This Contagion of mutual aid may not spread fast enough for some, but wherever it goes the oppressed have hope.

Visualize a discouraged widow with her small emaciated daughter entering a credit union pawn shop initiated by Kagawa. Her child needs more and better food. Otherwise little Hisako will come down with tuberculosis. But all the mother has of any value in the world is the kimono on her back, an heirloom which her grandmother also treasured. "How much will you lend me for this?" she fearfully asks of the young manager back of the counter. To her great surprise and joy he allows her seven dollars; the interest is 2 per cent instead of the usual ruinous 30 per cent—and she can have a long time to redeem that kimono. "How long?" "Your lifetime if necessary." She wakes up from her nightmare of suicide. With the seven dollars she has carfare to look for a job. Meanwhile, there will be radishes and bean curds for Hisako—vitamins to build up the child's resistance.

Again, let us see what the movement can do to and through a bespectacled young member of Japan's "lost" generation. This is an imaginary picture, to be sure, and somewhat Utopian, but it is suggestive of possibilities. The young man is disheartened. What's the use, he wonders, of wearing out one's shoes getting a college education? He pushes his way into a crowded Kagawa meeting. This disgruntled graduate has heard a good many

lectures in his day but this one is startling. First, it traces through the centuries the brotherhood movement. Then it leads you personally to the place where you want to act in the cause of brotherhood yourself. As the hall empties he waits for a word in private with the lecturer. Curiously, this man who has been bending a big audience to his will for an hour and a half seems in no hurry to get home. Of course he will give the student an interview. When? Right now! The student wants to be of some use in the world. What village does he come from? Very well, let him go back and start a hen co-operative. One of the credit loan co-operatives will lend him the money, and there is a special brand of hen another co-operative has been producing. In a few minutes the student sees things he could do with and for his fellow villagers that had never occurred to him before; Kagawa, he finds, is a specialist in possibilities.

The young man has difficulties at first in getting the farmers to respond to the idea. They have been crushed in debt so long that it all seems hopeless. But the hens are expert at laying and the eggs speak for themselves. The market is sure; it is one of Kagawa's consumers' co-operatives in the city. Eventually the village joins the venture, and then things begin to happen. With the aid again of the credit co-operative, pigs, goats and sheep are pastured on the mountainous hillside that was supposed to be valueless. Barley also is grown. Acorn-bearing trees for fodder are planted. In time the new walnut and chestnut trees are supplementing the rice and fish diet of the farmers. As for fish, it is not necessary now to spend so much money buying them from the harbor. A tested kind of co-operative fish is spawned in the pools and streams.

In a few years the village is free of debt and the farmers not only collectively purchase the fertilizer and machines for their fields; they also increasingly own them. But minds as well as stomachs become filled. The young people deliver a newspaper especially adapted to the farmers in their struggle to co-operatize the village. Two-hundred-page novels written by Kagawa with direct bearing on this issue, costing no more than five cents, are also made available.

But Kagawa does not leave the awakening of the villages to chance contacts. He combs among the likely young farmers and then assembles a few of the most promising ones in his home or some center to meet with him at close quarters. For a week, or even a month, they study together the history of "love in action," new methods of agriculture, along with the technique of organizing the villages and building all sorts of co-operatives. To reach one of these gospel farmer schools a young man walked at a good clip fifty days. Another returned to his village so enthusiastic and competent that he was elected mayor. At two o'clock in the morning he gets up to deliver at farm doors the inexpensive paper that spreads the idea. The money thus earned he puts into a co-operative fund to help families in distress. The quality of his interest is suggested by this fact: at each door he offers a prayer that the movement may prosper in and through that home. Kagawa told us in 1936 that he was still looking in America for a mayor who does any of these things. Already, Kagawa has established several such gospel schools in Japan. His plan is to found hundreds of village churches. There would be two or three services of worship. But during the week-days there would also be classes to meet the needs of women and children along with night classes for men, with trained leaders to work out a carefully planned program to transform rural life.

Hospitals owned and operated by the people who use them is another significant development. Soon after returning from his third trip to the United States in the autumn of 1931, Kagawa with others launched what proved to be a model co-operative hospital. He knew a child specialist who for years had given a great deal of energy to charity work, but who was not satisfied with his efforts. The charity patients were too often demoralized. At the same time, there were impoverished middle-class people too proud to accept charity treatment. These suffered in silence without medical assistance. A co-operative hospital would help. Catching Kagawa's vision, the doctor was glad to serve at one-fifth his former income. Today the Tokyo unit has more than nine thousand members. They pay a small regular amount to the hospital. Then if an appendix, for example, has to be removed,

it is done by surgeons on the staff for less than twenty dollars. If the patient is also a member of one of the credit co-operatives he can borrow what the emergency demands without excessive interest. In some instances the farmer now pays only 9 per cent of his income for medical aid; it used to be something like 28 per cent.

Co-operative soup kitchens are a recent project. More than three thousand Tokyo housewives now have delivered at their doors a scientifically balanced meal, three times a day, at a surprisingly low cost.

"But," Americans impatiently ask, "what good are all these co-operative ventures if they don't stop the Japanese military machine in China? Isn't it like sparrows cheerfully laying their eggs in a machine-gun nest?"

Kagawa's assumption for years has been that a good way to prevent Japanese aggression is to develop a contented farming class within his own country and also a friendly relationship between China and Japan—through the co-operative movement. In Denmark, thanks, in good part, to the co-operative movement, the farmers own their own farms. Fascism comes largely from desperation. Such freedom from humiliation as democratic Denmark enjoys definitely encourages a peaceable foreign policy. Again, in her relations with England, Denmark sets an example that should be imitated over the world. Every breakfast John Bull has a better taste in his mouth toward his Scandinavian neighbor because the eggs and butter on his table are what they ought to be; they come from the Danish producers' co-operatives shipping direct to the English consumers' co-operatives. In return, the Danish consumers' co-operatives use woolen and cotton goods produced in England. Kagawa wants to develop a similar interchange of commodities between China and Japan. Japan needs access to China's mineral deposits, soya beans, and markets. China needs Japanese-made goods. . . . He is aware of the folly of Japanese militarists thinking they can better Japan by shooting potential customers in China.

But is he aware of the implications of the Japanese army's technique of destroying China with opium as well as with bayonets?

Again, to those non-Japanese friends of his who take the stand of absolute resistance to war, his seeming acquiescence or at least silence, is a paradox in his nature that they find hard to accept. God speaks through a saint at one time but not necessarily at another; in one area of his relationships but not inevitably in all. Kagawa's co-operative movement within and across the nations is *one* basic factor in the effort toward justice and thus world peace. But it is not the only one.

It has had its reverses. It could become an escape from more difficult tasks, such as directly opposing the war machine and directly legislating for the socialization of power. We have to be honest about this. Yet Kagawa's contribution remains.

What Kagawa most convincingly reveals is not so much the patterns for a different economic set-up as the possibilities for a new kind of manhood. He knows that the conditions of society cannot be transformed unless at the bottom and top of the drive for social change are at least a few men of integrity. His is the gift of setting potential leaders on fire and keeping them on fire. To understand Kagawa, we have to see the tragic and triumphant beauty of the lives of some who have done strategic work with him.

Consider Yosangoro Ueda. He was a drunkard, veteran gambler, and wife beater, thirty-six years old, always running away from himself. His fights had left him one good eye and thirteen scars; he had been in jail three times. One evening in the slums he encountered a young man talking to a small crowd.

"You can have a new life," said the young man.

To Ueda he seemed to be looking straight into his discouraged heart. When he carried his lantern back to his tiny church, Ueda followed and asked for an interview. Kagawa was not at all shocked at the story of the wives whom he had abandoned and the wives who had left him. His chief interest was reconstruction.

"How much money do you need to begin again as bean-curd seller?"

"A yen and a half."

"Here it is," said Kagawa, handing him the paper notes. "You go back to your shop and start tomorrow."

Ueda San could hardly believe in such a venture of trust. But next morning he was at his business. To keep from drinking saké he put red pepper in his mouth, with only meager success. At last he found himself winning through. Kagawa found him a Christian wife. In time he had the joy of seeing a baby daughter in his home; then other children. He had something to live for. At three in the morning he would get up for his all-day work in the bean-curd shop. The place was neat. New machinery was installed. Customers liked to trade there. At night, tired out, he would join Kagawa and take care of the lantern with its painted characters, "God is love." The problems of the down-and-outs were second nature to him. Soon in his spare time he became a street preacher himself. Somehow he got along on little sleep. An old, helpless, neglected man he took into his home. In time Ueda died; but not before his life had proved a leavening force in the Shinkawa slums.

Kagawa is a genius for making things happen in the outside world. But first he makes them happen in human minds. He is utterly dedicated, as he works for a new world, to such growth of personality as shall lead to further growth.

So thoroughly does he believe in night schools for laborers that he has put perhaps five thousand yen from his book royalties into this type of educational work. The night school that he established in Kobe is the cause, he claims, of his co-operative movement in that city. In the Shinkawa slums he also had a class at five o'clock in the morning, consisting of only two pupils. The results seem to have given the teacher a life-long prejudice in favor of classroom work. One pupil became a minister who headed up an employment bureau in Tokyo. The other, who devotedly attended his class an hour before the whistle blew in the book bindery, became his wife.

After his own graduate work in Princeton he financed a doctor friend's research abroad, and then sent him on to Europe, to bring back the best techniques of preventive medicine. Today in the Tokyo Co-operative Hospital, Kagawa keeps the value of the movement constantly before the attention of the doctors by circulating among them a special newssheet.

George Eliot once declared that a mind that produces the greatest quality of thought also produces the greatest quantity of it. Certainly Kagawa's literary and educational work is voluminous.

Quite probably few minds today are more fertile in the field of human betterment, if not more penetrating, than his. He sees what others overlook. Then he makes them look again. It is familiar knowledge that 85 per cent of Japan's land is mountainous, and a few experts know that one hundred and fifty bushels of acorns could be harvested from a single acre of that waste territory. But it takes Kagawa to write *A Grain of Wheat,* a novel purchased by many thousands of eager readers, which romantically shows the hero planting the trees on a neglected hillside. Incredible as this sounds, until he had the leisure of an ocean voyage to enjoy motion pictures up in the saloon, Kagawa had never even witnessed a film on the screen. He was always too busy awakening other minds. Months before, however, his own *A Grain of Wheat* had proved a success on the screen in Japan.

It was the first volume of his novel, *Crossing the Deathline,* that probably accomplished as much as any single piece of writing in Japan to arouse the public to the problem of the slums. Until that problem was personified, until it became embodied in the gallant effort of a tubercular student throwing his life away for this drunkard and that orphan, it was just a blur. But Kagawa turned the blur into living persons. The story was his own life-blood. Battling for his breath in the fishing village where he cooked his own rice, when he could get it, and befriended the sailors as if he were one of them, the twenty-year-old novelist would write with a brush his narrative on cast-off newspapers and magazines picked up on the beach. He was too poor to buy clean rice paper. Years later an editor of a magazine visited the young social worker in the slums.

"Any local color here?" asked the editor.

"Take a look at this," answered Kagawa, pulling from under a pile of magazines and papers the yellowing pages of the old manuscript. The editor sensed its value and took his host's breath away by offering several hundred dollars for the right to publish it. When it came out in book form a responsive chord

was struck throughout Japan. More than a quarter of a million copies were sold.

The second volume of this half-autobiographical novel appeared at precisely the moment the labor movement needed it most. The now famous author was in jail for leading a strike of dockyard workers. Because his disciples were making too much of a disturbance, calling to him in the men's ward, the authorities put him among the women as a special punishment. But the women liked "Mr. Non-Resistance," and they mended his clothes. Instead of bemoaning his fate, he strolled back and forth two miles a day in the cell scarcely larger than his own room, humorously calling it a residence two miles wide, and he put on weight since the jail food was superior to what he had been allowing himself in the slums. Forbidden the usual writing materials, he wrote a section of another book on toilet paper. The point is that at the very time he was in jail long lines of citizens were standing in front of the book stores waiting for a chance to buy *Shooter at the Sun*. Kagawa was thus able in a unique way dramatically to focus interest on the cause of the strikers.

Kagawa has to his credit more than sixty books, including fairy tales for children, lives of Jesus, sociological studies; novels about fishermen, co-operatives, the slums; innumerable articles and lectures on nature or sociology in daily papers with a million circulation; serial stories in boys' or farmers' magazines, some of which he edits himself. His aim in all this is to extend the community spirit in order that all men may live on good terms with one another.

But his writing and teaching, dedicated to a co-operative order free from war and the present extremes of wealth and poverty, changes not only the climate. It changes persons. His fiction is redemptive rather than merely critical.

A prostitute read in a popular woman's magazine of Japan one of Kagawa's serials. The girl in that story could have been herself. Here was fiction that did things to you. She left the brothel, later married, and is now a vital force in the movement away from exploitation and toward the sharing of power.

A young man headed for suicide was persuaded by a friend to

visit a house of prostitution first. Why not have a last fling? The girl allotted to him asked him why he was so sad. He explained how the universe seemed to be against him.

"Have you met Kagawa?" she asked.

"Why, no."

"I haven't either; but I have been reading his stories. My time here is up in a few days. As soon as I can I am going to find him. He knows how we suffer. But he also offers hope. You'd better see him."

The youth who was about to slam the door on life, wrote to the author. Kagawa answered his letter and sent him a copy of his book, *New Life Through God*. The correspondence developed into friendship. Out of the friendship he found himself.

Thus and in subtler ways the Great Contagion spreads.

5

GAMBLER MAGNIFICENT

A FEW WEEKS after his first Christmas in the slums, the moon was full and Kagawa was fast asleep on the floor. Suddenly awakened he saw a leering face in the doorway, and in the man's hand a glittering sword. It was a gangster mad with drink. He had come to kill Kagawa and to take any money he could find on the dead body. Copper Statue was stretched out on the floor beside him sleeping, as usual. He was defenceless, it seemed, and alone this zero hour. At any second now that uplifted sword might flash toward his heart.

Slowly Kagawa rose to his knees and bowed his head in prayer. On his knees he remained, motionless, silent.

The calm as of another world did its work on the attacker. Taken by surprise he stood gripping his sword not knowing what to do. At last he whimpered, "Kagawa, do you love me?"

"Yes."

"I give my sword to you."

As if his visitor were not a cast-off drunkard of the alleys but

a feudal knight swearing loyalty in a court of honor, Kagawa accepted the sword.

Once I ventured to ask him a very personal question. "Your life has often been threatened," I said, "gangsters have pointed pistols at you or held swords over you. But how often? Ten times?" He laughed and shook his head. I kept on pressing him: "Fifty times?" He smiled again, negatively. "A hundred times?" He was chuckling now: "Perhaps so—a hundred times."

"But surely you must have been afraid, at least some of those times when death was so close."

"No, I was abiding in God. When there is contact with God there is no fear."

From the light on his face I knew it was so. He really is "unpersuaded by the show of death." He has the same secret that Gandhi and Schweitzer have: he so lives in the moment that he seems to live in eternity. For one who lives in eternity, no ambitions, no feelings of inferiority, no self-consciousness blur the picture. The past has no power to poison him. The future has no terror nor hectic sense of things undone to pursue him. He can give all his thought to the job at hand. There are no inhibitions. He is therefore whole-hearted.

Is that why Kagawa gets things done so effectively? When he toured Australia, he impressed those who thronged to hear him as possessing many valued traits; but the least expected and most conspicuous as reported by one keen observer was the trait of "practical-mindedness"—the habit of reacting intelligently and effectively to situations that often baffle the diffident, the half-religious. If Gandhi is what his friends say he is, "stubborn as a mule," Kagawa is no less obstinate. He will find a way. No obstacle is likely to stop him, once he makes up his mind.

His last trip to this country provides two amusing illustrations. When he stepped out of the train at Decatur, Illinois, he asked the chairman of the receiving committee what town this was. The answer set him walking firmly in the opposite direction from the important personages gathered to welcome him. Overtaking him, the minister in charge of his heavy schedule asked him where he was going.

"To talk to those girls on strike. They wrote asking me to meet them, and now I am going to their headquarters."

There was no derailing him. The official either had to see Kagawa going on foot or he had to take him in his own car and let the leading citizens wait.

When Kagawa arrived in Louisville, those in charge of his schedule cancelled the speaking engagements for the day and packed him off to bed in a hotel because he was unquestionably ill. He had remonstrated. Wasn't this the stop nearest to Lincoln's birthplace? He thought more of Lincoln than of any other American, and he was preparing a lecture to broadcast to the Japanese people upon his return. He would like very much to see that shrine. But the committee was adamant. That afternoon, when they came back to the hotel to see whether Kagawa was recovering, they were informed by the hotel clerk that he had left. They waited in the lobby. At last he entered buoyant. It was raining. Surely he hadn't exposed himself outside? "Not very much," smiled the incorrigible little man, "I visited Lincoln's shrine in a taxi." It was perhaps sixty miles away, but he had known what he was about. The first-hand experience at the shrine of America's greatest democrat would give him useful ammunition in his fight against fascism in Japan.

Earlier in his career some solicitous friends in Japan cancelled all his speaking engagements. He had to avoid a break-down by resting for thirty days. They were surprised to find him so meek, so willing to go off to a cottage in the country away from all this activity. At the end of the thirty days they were even more surprised. He had smuggled in a stenographer and dictated two or three books.

"Kagawa," in Japanese, means "Happy River." His energy seems to be fed by imperishable glaciers like those which high above timberline keep the trout streams of the Canadian Rockies always running. The amazing horsepower that floods through him does not splash in all directions; rather, he skilfully channels his drives according to a rather clearly imaged plan. During the first three or four years after entering the slums he had a fever, but this did not interfere with the schedule he set for himself.

After an hour of early teaching, he would write a chapter or an article. If a ruffian insisted on wiggling the table, Kagawa would bargain prudently and buy him off with a yen, as we have seen. The morning's literary product, he figured, would probably bring in two yen. That was good business, a net gain of one yen—and if he protested too much his own funeral would cost more than twice the amount thus saved. In the afternoon he would personally attend to a dozen sick, dying, or unemployed persons, giving them medicine, a prayer, or if possible information enabling them to get work. Since he soon won the reputation of being a sort of divine healer, his task was complicated by the number of sick who would call to him in the street:

"Teacher, won't you lay hands on me for just a minute?"

"Teacher, the last time you prayed I didn't have pain all night."

This business of praying for the sick he found to be a terrific drain on his energy. When he could, he would organize games for the children. Then there was his clinic in the next room, and always the "hospital" room adjoining his own where he nursed the derelicts. After supper he would teach a class of boys. At eight he would take a paper lantern and stand on a street corner beside a circle of crouching gamblers to preach. The heckling was simply a stimulus to continue. If he was struck on the face or threatened with a sword, the moment the affair was over he would forget it. He would waste no time on self-pity.

Early one Sunday morning, in September, 1923, he got word that Tokyo and Yokohama had had the life nearly shaken out of them by a giant earthquake. A few hours later, after organizing a relief committee, he was on his way to the scene of destruction. Hardly had he surveyed the situation when he found himself appointed on the Imperial Relief Committee. Of all the socially minded intellectuals of the Japanese Empire he was singled out in spite of his "dangerous thoughts" to organize relief because he understood the poor and had demonstrated his administrative ability. From then on the quantity and quality of his work made him a national figure. Within a few days he had gathered a group of young men around him to run the milk depots, barber

shops, and bath houses; and to erect shelters for the thousands of milling refugees.

A Buddhist priest who hesitated to use the temple grounds for relief purposes one morning awoke to see Kagawa's tents everywhere. Protesting, he was told that Buddhism obligates the disciple to be kind to those who suffer, and why shouldn't the priest come along and co-operate? So impressed was he with what he witnessed that he accepted the challenge; when he died, worn out with good works, he was famous as "the savior priest."

After the day's concentrated labor, Kagawa, for about a hundred and forty-five evenings in succession, spoke to great crowds of people in theaters and churches. As a result, thousands found an entirely new direction for their lives.

A year later he paid his second trip to America and his first to Europe. From Denmark he brought plans and a gift of money to start the peasant gospel schools. From the California Japanese he collected enough to finance rural colleagues living on a heroically simple basis. Since communism, with its commitment to dictatorship and the war method, was spreading among the farmers, Kagawa threw a good deal of his energy into political campaigns. Due in part to his efforts, the bill for universal manhood suffrage won the day. The leadership of the left-wing groups among the farmers and laborers slipped out of his fingers because of his dedication to democratic and unwarlike methods. But he bided his time.

It came with the depression. The liberal mayor of Tokyo realized that the conventional methods of doling out relief were inadequate, and that Kagawa's mind and energy if enlisted would help to save the situation. He offered him the job of deputy social adviser at a yearly salary of something like eighteen thousand yen. Kagawa accepted the position on two conditions: first, the mayor would have to obey him; and, second, he would not take a cent of money. There were to be no strings. He could not take a chance on compromise by having hostages to fortune. For ten days a month he untangled the confusion at the office, visited the unemployed, then pushed through legislation, including unemployment insurance and a liberal budget. The remaining

twenty days a month he devoted to the Kingdom of God Movement.

That movement, intimately associated with Kagawa's name, is an interesting demonstration of what united Christian forces can do. For years Kagawa had been brooding over the possibilities of a concerted Protestant movement in Japan. There were only 160,000 evangelical Christians in church membership. Their task was to get their hands on the wheel and guide the entire nation away from the liquor traffic, prostitution, militarism, exploitation of the poor, hopelessness, suicide, and all the ills of destitution. But to do this there must be a million genuine followers of Jesus, ablaze with his passion for a new society in which everybody could be at home with his neighbors, himself, and God.

Shortly after the great earthquake, Kagawa had already gathered around himself a disciplined youth movement called "The Friends of Jesus." The thirteen hundred members had to go through a stiff course of reading, including a history of the Catholic Christian martyrs of Japan (nearly a thousand pages), Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ,* and *Pilgrim's Progress.* Candidates had to practise social service like a track athlete training for a five-thousand-meter Olympic race. They could win their spurs by volunteer work for lepers, tuberculosis patients, children's playgrounds, or the co-operatives. Upon joining they had to open their homes for Sunday schools or neighborhood churches, and to help the unemployed members earn enough to live. They would assist labor unions, work for world peace and public purity; and live chaste, energetic, prayerful, and simple lives. Veterans in California can be found still meeting at six o'clock every Sunday morning for an hour together.

But Kagawa's dream was a larger, loosely federated body of all the Christians rapidly multiplying their force until there should be a million of them transforming the whole civilization of Japan. The clean-cut outline of this movement came to him as a result of hours of meditation alone.

During the first year there would be an intensive campaign to get people committed to the Best they knew. The second year would be given to educating those who had signed up. In the

third year they would be organized into a concerted pressure toward a more brotherly way of living, one objective being to establish in every church a mutual aid society or co-operative. The impression should not be given that Kagawa was the single individual originating this movement. It grew out of group planning. But his initiative and most of all his driving enthusiasm throughout the whole campaign had much to do with whatever success it reached. Technically, the goal was not reached. The three years have come and gone, and there are not even two-thirds of a million Christians in Japan today. Many of the churches shied off from Kagawa's effort to apply the gospel to economic matters. They do not agree with him that God stands in line with the unemployed and that he who forgets the unemployed forgets God. But the idea smoulders and at times it breaks out in the oddest places.

Sparks land even in China. In 1930, when the movement was under way, Kagawa presented his dynamic interpretation of Christianity in many Chinese centers, with some effect. After the deadly bombardment of Shanghai he was invited to speak in the devastated area, in a church whose minister and most of whose family had been killed either by Japanese shells or bayonets. It was not an easy invitation for the Chinese to issue. A dentist who belonged to the church prayed for two weeks that he might be able to forgive the Japanese Kagawa. That dentist's mother had also been killed. But at the end of the two weeks he was willing to welcome at least one of "the enemy." It was dangerous for Kagawa to go, much more dangerous than his Chinese friends realized. He himself expected to be shot down by his own countrymen. With this probability in mind he settled all his financial affairs. When he entered, the atmosphere of the Fitch Memorial Church must have been tense. But he felt no anxiety—only friendliness. Before his Chinese brothers he poured out his heart; the Japanese Christians had not prevented this invasion; they had been guilty of weakness before the militarists; for that weakness he himself in their behalf must ask forgiveness.

Orientals are supposed to be impassive, sphynx-like, not given to deep emotion. Before Kagawa was through they were all

united in tears. Those church members gave Kagawa a gift of more than one hundred dollars to further the Kingdom of God Movement in his own country.

Not as a direct outcome of this movement but closely associated with it, Kagawa's preaching has caused more than fifty thousand Japanese definitely to pledge their lives to the purpose back of it. In the autumn of 1937, in his evangelistic meetings, Christian decisions averaged something like a hundred daily. In Australia, New Zealand, the Philippine Islands, Europe, and America, innumerable others have been deeply affected.

The amazing achievements of this Oriental who would consider it only an ordinary day's work to launch a consumer's cooperative, deliver a campus lecture on science and religion, then at a mass meeting convert ten laborers to his movement, after that write or map out a chapter of a new novel, and in between these activities give American interviewers the sense of being unhurried —such creative energy is somewhat dazzling. But it should not blind us to Kagawa's weaknesses.

Undoubtedly he tries to cover too much ground. A man cannot be a cartoonist, amateur palaeontologist, statistician, prophet, life-changer, social engineer, bridge-builder between East and West, novelist, poet, magazine promoter, labor organizer, and political campaigner, and at the same time escape being now and then superficial. Kagawa is relatively humble. He does not seek to paint the world with himself. But all too often he scatters his interest over too many continents of thought. At any rate, he is sometimes too facile with his generalizations. "He talks science," complains an admiring student leader, "without knowing much about it. He can so indiscriminately combine odds and ends of outworn theological doctrines with profound philosophical insights as to bewilder an audience of American students." To certain liberals his dogmatism seems to be a sort of spiritual vermiform appendix that menaces the community. It ought to be removed. At great cost they have undergone this major operation themselves. Why, then, should not Kagawa?

A New York professor of social ethics thinks he is sentimental. Kagawa, he claims, imagines that the reactionary forces in the

world are less energetic and persistent than they actually are; he underestimates the power of militarism and imperialism in his own country, the tenacity of an "immoral society." There may be some truth in this criticism. Before a group of Americans, Kagawa, in 1936, dismissed the annoying warlords in Japan as "mosquitoes." No doubt the remark was meant humorously, but it also betrayed undue optimism. On the other hand, is it not ethically dangerous to magnify the *ultimate* strength of spiritual wickedness in high places? Nicholas Berdyaev, who was exiled from Russia by both Tsarist and Communist governments because of his dangerous thinking, has something to say to those who think they are realistic when they may only be unadventurous: "As long as in our struggle against evil we regard it as something strong and enticing and at the same time both awe-inspiring and forbidden, we are not going to achieve any radical or final victory over it." Kagawa may be a little too hopeful about the power of love in vast collective relationships. He may expect in the struggle for equality and peace *quicker* results from pure love than pure love can possibly achieve. Only future historians can tell. Of this we can be sure: he has learned in his battle for social justice not to be naive about what Berdyaev calls "the absolute emptiness and tedium of evil."

It is probably safe to say, what has already been suggested, that Kagawa counts too much on the co-operative movement as the Christian answer to fascism. Co-operatives are immensely important. But so are the thrust for freedom of speech, the organized labor movement, and the effort to socialize basic industries into which he threw so much of his initial energy. It seems that he has recently fallen into the habit of overstressing the first at the expense of the other three. He probably has his strategic reasons. For instance, if he made a direct attack instead of a flank co-operative approach, the Japanese government might silence him and Western church groups might boycott his message. Kagawa may be following a better educational technique than is recognized by those who wish he would campaign more outspokenly against inflated nationalism and for collective bargaining and industrial democracy. But to many it appears that the

world crisis will not wait for mustard seeds to become trees. The emergency today demands immediate, unwarlike political pressures as well as the slow growth of co-operatives that Kagawa preaches.

The great thing about Kagawa is that he is more interested in reflecting good will than in reflecting upon it. One noon, in 1931, in a Los Angeles washroom I observed him secretly, silently embodying that of which he has the right to speak. An important luncheon was awaiting Kagawa, and the party was eager to get upstairs. In our hurry, we Americans thoughtlessly threw our paper towels on the floor. Not so Kagawa. He lingered behind. Pretending to leave with the others I peeked through a crack in the door. I knew that he was pretty well used up with the hard traveling, committee meetings, speeches and other items of a terrific schedule; and that the doctor had warned him that very week that quite possibly every organ in his body excepting his brain was diseased. What I saw in that washroom has haunted me ever since. There stooped Kagawa, unaware that he was being observed. Each paper towel he carefully picked up and dropped into the wastebasket. Unobtrusively he was showing courtesy to a janitor who would never thank him, whom he would never see.

It is reported that an American student on the fringe of a crowd was unable to catch more than a few of Kagawa's words; but he went away satisfied, and a friend noticed that his life had already found fresh color and zest. That young American's comment is illuminating: "A man hanging on a cross like that doesn't need words."

Kagawa, as few men living, has the gift of words—and the sense of their inadequacy. He knows with Goethe that the highest cannot be spoken. He will, if called upon, pray in public, briefly, pointedly. But when it comes to facing the big crisis—and every day in his life appears to bring some sort of crisis—he prefers silence and solitude. At the time the Kingdom of God Movement was in formation, he used to wake up at one in the morning and open his whole being to the guiding Presence to whom he has given his life.

If those who complain about Kagawa's seeming lack of back-

bone in opposing Japanese militarism, knew how literally and violently it aches, they might be more tolerant. During sleepless hours at night he eases the pain by getting up from bed and sitting in a chair, seeking a peace that passes our understanding.

To sense what prayer does for Kagawa we must recall how physically weak he is. The trachoma germs that he caught from a homeless beggar who slept beside him in the slums are not in his system now, perhaps. But one eye is useless, and the other is impaired. When his eyesight is weakened through fatigue he sometimes finds himself completely or almost completely in the dark.

A day or so before an important national conference of young Americans, held at Lakeside, Ohio, in 1936, he went almost blind. He had been overworked, going from city to city, speaking in English three or four times a day; and now he had no choice but to pray. His recovery was amazing. Upon inquiry it was brought out that before emerging into the light again, he had in one day enjoyed two periods of almost motionless meditation. Each period was about five hours long.

"Where was his mind during all that time?" one inevitably asks. Probably upon the co-operative movement that he hoped to see developing throughout the United States. He would also no doubt be thinking of the Russians, praying that a revival of Christian brotherhood might sweep over that land. Unquestionably the Dakota farmers, whom he had seen suffering from drought, were on his conscience if not on his lips.

But there must also have been a long stretch of focused attention, the skilled use of a technique of prayer about which we Americans know almost nothing. Kagawa apparently utilizes certain methods employed by the Zen sect of Buddhists. It involves complete relaxation of body and disciplined stillness of mind. As a result, strange things sometimes happen. Apparently the blood circulates more normally, thus removing poison and healing pain. In any case, the person practising this routine draws upon extracurative power and illumination. Sensitiveness not to one's own pain but to a greater and more central fact is developed. The reality of being at home in the universe becomes more sure.

Another by-product of this communion seems to be an exhilaration of mind open only to athletes of the spirit.

A few days after thus "basking in the light" and recovering from his blind spell, Kagawa let a small group of us look a moment through his soul's east window of surprise. He was sitting on a bench facing Lake Erie. "See that rock with the waves washing it," he exclaimed with delight, "I have joy in that rock." He certainly knew something about its formation. "Look at this bench," and he rose to touch it almost tenderly, "it is swarming with electrons, full of mystery, full of life. I have joy in it."

Here was a man sensitive and responsive to wave-lengths that left us cold. But he was no fanatic other-worldling. A "Canadian soldier" or June bug after a long flight across the lake had just landed on Kagawa's black hat. Then across his ear it slowly and maddeningly dragged its tail, consisting of two long horse hairs. With a gesture completely un-Gandhilike, the agile little Japanese saint rid himself of the pest, much to the earthly joy of the students. Then he told them in answer to questions, how he prayed; but one felt that he was exposing only part of the picture. There were some things American students were not sufficiently trained to grasp about which he would keep silent.

"I pray about concrete problems. If, for example, the co-operative movement needs money I don't hesitate to bring that problem into the presence of God. But I never ask for money for myself. For myself I ask for knowledge. If a prayer is not answered right away, I am not disappointed. It may be that God does not want to hasten his Kingdom through me." The students caught the humor of this. "But generally my prayers are answered. Of course they may take a long time. Like a tree growing, they may take ten or fifteen years. When I can, I like to have a good time alone. But if ten minutes is all I can get early this morning that is enough. In that time I can get directions from God as to what to do during the day. Prayer is more than desire. It is *willing* something to happen, willing it in the consciousness of God."

Some of us recalling his boyhood aspiration, "make me a great man like Christ," realized that the life of Kagawa is his best

argument for prayer. We sensed too that prayer is his crucible in which his individual will has become increasingly fused with a higher socializing will.

He likes to pray on his knees alone. But he can also pray with great effect on his feet facing a mob. The occasion has been mentioned earlier. It was in 1921, during the Dockyard strike in Kobe. Agitators for violence had been working the strikers into an angry mob. They had stiffened their resolve by reading a manifesto at a Shinto shrine, and now thirty in a row, something like ten thousand men were trotting shoulder to shoulder down a broad street toward the dockyards, rhythmically shouting the word for attack—"washo! washo!" They were out to destroy if need be, and be destroyed. Awaiting them were four hundred policemen, sabers ready, and a regiment of three thousand soldiers with cartridges in the barrel. Years before a great Japanese hero had given his life down there by the bridge: these strikers were willing to shed their blood too.

Kagawa's lungs would not have taken him to the strategic place if he ran, so he jumped in a rickshaw. Dismissing the coolie, he stood in front of the bridge. If somehow he could get the mob, rushing toward him with the pressure of a river, to swing over to the right and not across this bridge, the day would be saved. If not, their cause and not just the Kawasaki Dockyards would in a few minutes be wrecked.

In crises of life and death, Kagawa does not smile and he does not speak. With his eyes open he prayed. The front line swept closer. He looked into their eyes and put all of himself into this petition "O God, give us peace."

The leaders swerved, and the ten thousand followed, away from disaster.

Kagawa has the trick of seeing the right direction clearly and urgently through prayer, and then betting everything upon that right direction. He holds nothing back. All his money, excepting a few dollars a month to maintain the little house on the outskirts of Tokyo where he and his wife and two daughters and a son share the barest necessities with families needier than themselves—all his money he throws into the thirty or more settle-

ment houses, churches, schools, nurseries, clinics, and co-operatives that he partly maintains through writing and speaking.

The laborer who pawned his clothing to help his union win a strike appeals to Kagawa. But his heart beats faster at the memory of a slum urchin whom he used to see returning from the pawnshop with virtually nothing on. The child's parents were gamblers. They had a whole-heartedness that he coveted for his own movement. When luck was going against them, this family would send the child to pawn everything they had. "That boy would become naked and lose everything for gambling. So would I. Because I lived in the slums many, many years, I became a gambler for God. I wanted to pawn everything for Christ. I don't care about food, books, honor, money, or anything. I want to be a gambler for God."

Gandhi

6

SUPER-RESISTER

His voice was now soprano, now baritone, and the boy was just as confused as his changing voice. His child wife had no fear of cobras or ghosts. But the sight of a snake wriggling in the grass was enough to turn him deathly pale; and, unless a light was burning in his bedroom he was too scared to sleep.

Somehow or other he seemed always to be making false motions. The servants who worked for his father had all too few coppers to purchase rice. Nevertheless he robbed them to pay for the cigarettes he smoked. At the age of fifteen he made away with some gold belonging to his brother. Although it was considered a deadly sin by his people, he joined a friend in the experiment of secretly eating meat to see whether the British diet would give him more hair on his chest. Then he would lie to his mother about it. In time he and his friend, becoming adolescently disgusted with life and themselves, decided to put a violent end to it all. In the jungle they gathered some poisonous seeds. But they began to question themselves. What good would it do just to die? And wouldn't it be very painful if they did? Losing their enthusiasm for suicide, each swallowed only one or two of the seeds, and death passed them by.

He did not dare to speak to his father about all this. But one day he worked up enough courage to write a confession about the stealing. This he took to his father's room. The father was ill in bed. The boy handed him the carefully penned letter, which declared that he was sorry and that he would from that time

on act differently; meanwhile he would accept any punishment his father would suggest. He expected drastic treatment, certainly a tongue-lashing. The boy got the surprise of his life. The father read the confession. After a moment tears poured down his cheeks. He lay there perfectly still, with eyes closed. Then without a word he tore up the letter. "I could see my father's agony," wrote the son years later. "Those pearl drops of love cleansed my heart and washed my sin away."

Not much of a start? Well, that one-time coward for all his boyhood deceit and cynicism, today is recognized the world over as "Mahatma" or "Great-Soul" Gandhi—one of the most courageous, sincere, and life-reverencing men ever known. Squatting cross-legged before his spinning wheel, this almost toothless man in his early seventies with the large ears and dancing eyes and scarcely a hundred pounds of flesh draped over his protruding bones, Britain, farthest-flung empire of all time, cannot safely ignore.

Once he faced the English king on a formidable occasion when everybody else had on impressive clothes, dressed only in his homespun garment looking something like track pants, and a shawl. As he left Buckingham Palace someone twitted him for wearing so little. Gandhi chuckled: "His Majesty had on enough for both of us."

His is the humor that has said good-bye to self-consciousness and weakness. What an achievement Gandhi's gaiety is you may guess from the fact that even in his early twenties he was sometimes absurdly shy. In a Bombay law court as a struggling attorney he once found himself so tongue-tied that there was nothing to do but sit down and let someone else argue before the judge. Today it is his opponents who are confused, and his simple words have a bewildering power to stir not only most of his three hundred million countrymen but the conscience of the civilized world.

Many of India's fifty million or so pariahs will no doubt continue to be oppressed by those of the upper castes, and British soldiers will probably remain for many years as unwelcome guests in the great peninsula. But both untouchability and imperialism from

now on are likely to have the odds ultimately against them as they meet the force that Gandhi embodies.

That force he calls *satyagraha*. It means truth-force: truth that gets itself into your blood and keeps you fighting for what is right without feeling anger or showing discourtesy. Instead of hating the man who stands against you, you will do the best for him. You try to awaken the real hero in him so that he will do the decent thing. But whether he does or not, you turn the searchlight on the evil he is doing. He may strike you. He may kill you. You keep on resisting his unjust acts until either you die or he quits. Blood may be shed—it won't be his. You take the punishment yourself.

This may sound foolish and sentimental. But before we dismiss Gandhi's weapon as soft and ineffective, let us watch it being used in a situation where the opposition had all the sacred fury of vested interests and religious fanaticism combined.

The first time I heard this story about the Province of Travancore, South India, beginning in the village of Vykom, I simply did not believe it. But an American lawyer who lived about seven months with Gandhi and nearly four years in India, vouches for this incident, as do two English clergymen who should not be particularly prejudiced. One of these was an eye-witness.

The issue was whether or not the Untouchables should be allowed to use a highway that ran through the village of Vykom. The road was maintained out of the public funds; beside it were Brahmin houses and a temple. "Such being the case," an Occidental who has never lived in India might interrupt, "where is the issue? If the Untouchables wanted to walk down that road and visit the temple, why shouldn't they?" But anyone who has lived any time in the land of deeply entrenched castes and inviolable custom would know that it was not so simple as that. Suppose a Brahmin happened to be coming out of his house at the time an Untouchable was passing by. If the householder so much as rubbed elbows with the other he would not only be deeply humiliated; he would have to go to a great deal of trouble to purify himself of contamination. Even an Untouchable's shadow would spoil his holiness. "We had rather die," you can

almost hear the Brahmins muttering, "than see our thoroughfare defiled by the presence of Untouchables." As for the excluded Untouchables, who eat carrion and garbage and sleep in dirty huts outside the village because they have been born as outcastes, to walk along that road would be not only a mark of self-respect. It would be an economic benefit.

A young Christian interested in Gandhi's technique of securing social justice decided that he would do something about it. He took an Untouchable and quietly walked with him down the highway. In a few minutes both he and his companion were beaten by the Brahmins. The next time they were arrested. Before long other followers of Gandhi were put in jail for the same offence, and there were so many of them that the authorities were baffled. Orders had to be given that there were to be no more arrests. So the military police formed a cordon across the road.

Gandhi at the time was ill and many miles away, but he directed the campaign from his sickbed. His followers were to use absolutely no violence. They were to be civil. They were not to lose their tempers. On no account were they to give in. Let them stand with their Untouchable brothers in an attitude of prayer in front of the police and wait for victory. This they did, in six-hour shifts. How would you like to be a policeman, all set for violence, standing hour after hour in one spot while your opponent stood opposite you with his hands folded, perhaps even praying for you? One would like to know what those policemen thought. These young people seemed to mean business. They built huts by the side of the road, and every day each of them did his patriotic stint on the spinning wheel. For months the strange battle continued.

Then the rains came, steadily, overwhelmingly. The highway became a small river, so the police brought boats—for themselves. The Satyagrahis or "truth-forcers" kept on standing there, at first in water up to their knees and then up to the waist. Six hours at a time was too long, so they now had three-hour shifts. Week after week they took turns standing in front of the police in a posture of prayer. It is said that sometimes, when the boats were not well anchored, the young people, standing more than waist-

high in water, would help to hold them in place. However that may be, the struggle implacably continued. And Gandhi's followers were to stick it till the hearts of the Brahmins were melted. Some of the Brahmins had been so deeply impressed by this display of courage that they had joined the Gandhi-ites. But the road was still closed to Untouchables.

At last, after one year and four months, without a single reported act of violence by Gandhi's strange army, satyagraha or "truth-force" had its effect. The Brahmins admitted that they could resist no longer, saying: "We are ready to receive the Untouchables." But the victory did not stop there. Not only were low-caste people allowed on that village highway. All through the province the roads were opened.[1]

It is claimed by a certain eminent Occidental that Gandhi's followers number or have numbered more than those commanded by any other living man, or for that matter probably by any person who ever lived during that person's lifetime; and it is further claimed that this technique of non-violent coercion has more power in it to transform the world than all the poison gases or other weapons of destruction invented since man first started fighting for his rights. When the late Will Rogers said, "the trouble with Gandhi is he has no Navy," he may have been quietly pulling the leg of the over-armed West and pointing out its weakness rather than its strength. We may be a little skeptical regarding these possibly exaggerated claims. At the same time we cannot help wondering, How did this idea of super-resistance get started in Gandhi's brain, and how did it develop?

Let us admit from the outset that although East and West may meet, the "Great Soul" will always be a mystery; we, especially if we are Occidental, will probably miss some of the important factors. But there is so much romance in the story, incomplete though it will have to be, that we must try to put the pieces together.

Since Gandhi is an Indian nationalist and loyal to his own roots,

[1] Cf. *Gandhi: The Dawn of Indian Freedom.* J. C. Winslow and Verrier Elwin. Revell. P. 149.

he would probably trace back his idea to the Scriptures, which he reveres, of his own country.

The chances are he owes much to the powerful influence during his childhood of this verse of a Gujarati hymn: "If a man gives you a drink of water and you give him a drink in return, that is nothing. Real beauty consists in doing good against evil." At the age of twelve, he had already learned from a school book "not to hate anybody." He may also have been affected, indirectly, by the advice in the Law Book of Manu, not to return anger against an angry man; you should even bless another who curses you. Again, the Jain sect, with which the young Gandhi had close contact, taught that "the quintessence of wisdom is not to kill anything." Gandhi's people were Jains.

Another dominating influence was his mother. She was deeply devout. To keep her faith in condition she would sometimes take only one meal a day, or she would go the whole day without eating. She would hurt no living creature. Gandhi recalls a scene in his childhood that vividly brings out her love of life. The mother used to teach a small group of youngsters. One day a scorpion was seen crawling toward her bare feet. The pupils shuddered.

"It's going to bite you, Mother! Kill it! Kill it!" the boy shouted in panic. This was the mother's chance to drive home her lesson. She let the deadly insect crawl on the tender skin of her foot. Then without any fear on her face or nervousness in her movements, she slowly removed the shawl from her shoulder, coaxed the intruder onto it, then lifted the dangerous insect to the window, where she dropped it gently to the ground outside.

"You see," she explained quietly to her excited pupils, "I didn't hurt it. And it didn't hurt me."[2]

Gandhi was vitally touched by other scriptures and persons. An American biographer pictures the boy taking English lessons from an Irish tutor who had him memorize and repeat sentences

[2] Cf. *That Strange Little Brown Man, Gandhi.* Frederick B. Fisher. R. R. Smith. P. 8.

from the Sermon on the Mount, where you are told to turn the other cheek and not only to bless those who curse you but to love them as well and pray for them. Not, however, until he was a law student in England did Gandhi find himself deeply moved by these sayings of Jesus, which, he admits, went straight to his heart. And not even then did the full import of love-force, or, as he would call it, "truth-force," take possession of him. Among the formative influences are to be counted Thoreau's essay on civil disobedience, in which the American abolitionist urges conscientious objectors to refuse to pay taxes and in other ways to boycott government authorities when their policies do harm. William Lloyd Garrison may also have suggested to Gandhi the possibilities of organizing mass but non-violent resistance. Ruskin's *Unto This Last* affected him deeply as a young attorney in South Africa. It opened his eyes to the danger of having, and wanting, too much money. Tolstoi's interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount was to Gandhi's mind an unforgettable electric shock. Apparently as no other modern writer, the great Russian through his books and personal letters to Gandhi made clear the basic teaching of Jesus: Love is the law of life, and a will utterly dominated by the motive of helping other persons to grow has the backing of the universe.

Gandhi was exposed to much of the best of East and West. But why did he make such a unique response to that best? The stuff that he had in him from the start is part of the answer. Although as an adolescent, he deceived his mother, pretending that he was unable to eat what she had prepared because of indigestion when the real trouble was the "sinful meat" that he had already swallowed between meals; although, as a married youth, he was afraid to go to bed in the dark—in spite of all these weaknesses, the boy had an inner strength. It was slow to show itself. But we can detect it here and there. When an important inspector came to the school and Gandhi's teacher wanted him to steal a glance at his neighbor's desk to get the right spelling for the word "kettle," the boy was like rock. He would not cheat. The teacher might be likable; he might desire his pupils to make

a good impression on the inspector; but there were some things that young Gandhi could not do.

Later, the head man of his caste said he would excommunicate the nineteen-year-old if he persisted in his plan of crossing the sea and living with the heathen of England. Gandhi went anyway. Although as a law student in London, he did the conventional thing to the extent of taking dancing lessons and sporting a high silk hat, a swallow-tail coat, and a cane, he stood out against the crowd when it came to what he considered a moral issue. Before sailing he had promised his mother that while abroad he would be faithful to his wife and he would neither drink alcoholic liquors nor eat meat. Hindus enjoy telling how he once jumped up from a dinner table and left the party because he was sure that the soup was flavored with chicken or lamb. We know that many a time he went hungry in his determination to remain a true vegetarian.

In his early twenties, after having done rather poorly as an attorney in Bombay, Gandhi exhibited the same mettle. He was in South Africa on his way to a fairly good job that his brother had arranged for him. He was respectably dressed. In the pocket of his striped trousers was a first-class ticket on the railway from Durban. No one had objected to this Indian's riding first class during the day. But at nine o'clock that night a railway official ordered him to get out of the compartment intended for white people and ride second or third class. The young man who in London had worn evening clothes and passed the examinations for the bar did not intend to take this insult lying down. He stood where he was. Before the train pulled out of the station he was forcibly put out with his baggage, and left to think it over on the platform.

All night in the pitch-dark station he shivered, brooding over the injustice. Here he was, an attorney, trained in one of the great capitals of the world, a Hindu belonging to one of the four main castes in the home country, being treated like an outcaste. Did it occur to the proud young man that the upper bracketeers of his own race in India treated the underprivileged with even

more brutal disrespect? Whether so or not, the bitter experience put iron in his blood.

At last he took the stage. Because he was a "colored" man, he was not good enough to ride with the white passengers; so he had to sit up beside the driver. The conductor decided to take a smoke. Climbing the stairs he motioned to Gandhi to get out of his seat and sit on the floor.

"You sit there, Sammy!" he said roughly, pointing to some dirty sacking.

The young Hindu would not sit "there." Today his friends say that he is stubborn as a mule. He certainly was then. The conductor seized him by the arms and tried to push him down the stairs of the stage. For a moment Gandhi thought that the bones of his arms could not stand the strain as he hung on for dear life to the railing. Finally, some fellow passengers interfered, thinking that it was poor sportsmanship for a big conductor to pick on a not very husky fellow even if he was a "coolie." They persuaded the conductor to let the young man from India sit with them for the rest of the trip. We will never know all that happened to Gandhi's imagination and will during those two testing times. But it is a safe guess that a bit of India's nation-wide struggle to get free of white domination traces back to that moment when a young frock-coated Hindu's slender hands gripped an iron railing while the bones almost cracked.

In the following chapters we shall watch Gandhi again and again facing the ruthless and mighty forces massed against him, with a will that becomes finer but stronger. We see him hanging on to his idea—super-resistance. The opposition may crack. Gandhi's grip generally holds.

7

THE STRONGEST FORCE IN THE WORLD

South Africa might take Gandhi's body between its teeth and shake him as a terrier shakes the breath out of a rat, but it could not knock the conviction out of him that "love is the strongest

force in the world." So dynamically did he embody this conviction in an organized, practical program that he won the admiration of his opponents, and Tolstoi wrote him from Russia: "Your activity is the most essential work, the most important of all the work now being done in the world."

Gandhi did not come to South Africa with the idea of performing any such fundamentally useful work. He came for a short-term job, mostly to feather his own nest. A few hours before he was to return to India, a farewell banquet in the port city of Durban was given in his honor. For a twenty-four-year-old lawyer, starting out so poorly, he had done well. The two-hundred-thousand-dollar legal job had been concluded successfully; both parties at his suggestion had finally arbitrated their case and come to a satisfactory compromise. The practice of law was already becoming more than a means of livelihood. Gandhi was arriving at an exciting discovery: the law could be an opportunity to bring out the best in litigants instead of the worst, and they could sometimes be united. He also had done creditable public work, helping to build an association of Indians interested in struggling politically for their rights. But he had no intention as yet of throwing in his lot with the under-dog of South Africa. Within a few hours he would be sailing back to his family and India.

Someone handed him a newspaper. He read how the local legislature was planning to pass a bill prohibiting Indians from being elected to the legislative assembly. There were about eighty thousand of Gandhi's fellow countrymen in the province of Natal. Three-fourths of these were indentured; they had to work in mines or on farms almost as slaves for five years. The whites spoke contemptuously of even the Indian traders and ex-indentured farmers as "coolies." Had not Gandhi himself, in spite of his white collar, been excluded from hotels and literally kicked off the sidewalk by his white superiors? As it was, every Indian suffered acutely from arrogant race prejudice. But suppose this bill became a law? The situation would then be all but hopeless. Surely something could be done? Quickly at the table Gandhi drafted a petition against the proposed disfranchisement of Indians. He urged his hosts to push this petition.

"But," they turned to him helplessly, "you are the only man who can do all this. Won't you help us fight this through? Won't you stay on awhile, and then you can go back home?"

Gandhi cancelled his passage to India and he stayed on awhile —a full twenty years. His home henceforth was wherever he found fellow Indians being oppressed. The dinner party became a planning committee. Within a month he had secured ten thousand signatures to a protest filed with the government. In time the proposed law was overruled by London and the danger averted.

In Johannesburg, a mining city in the Transvaal lying to the west of Natal, he soon made a unique reputation as a lawyer who insisted on the truth always. One of his clients misrepresented the facts. Upon discovering the truth, Gandhi frankly told the judge what had happened and dropped the case like a hot coal. There were other instances of the young attorney's amazing candor. He never tutored his witnesses to lie. Before long, with rare exceptions, only those who were prepared to be honest dared employ him. It is said that at one time he was making fifteen thousand dollars a year. After two or three years Gandhi visited India and there he gave publicity to such grievances as the poll tax on ex-indentured Indians in South Africa. He made a point of understating the dark side, but the reports of his speeches reached Natal and the Transvaal in exaggerated form and aroused the hostility of the Europeans. Returning to the port of Durban with his family, he found the air electric. It happened that there were several other Indians on board ship and some white people were afraid that Gandhi was leading an "invasion" of Indians into South Africa. His wife and children landed safely. But soon after he stepped off the gangplank a gang of white boys began throwing things at him. Then a crowd gathered. "Here's Gandhi!" they shouted. "Let's beat him up." He became a target for stones. They slapped him, struck him with fists and sticks, and kicked him. To keep from fainting and falling to the ground, he seized hold of a railing and, as on the stage three years before, hung on for dear life.

The wife of the chief of police was passing. She made her

way to Gandhi, and although it was a cloudy day, she threw up her sun umbrella and asked him to accompany her. Gandhi could now manage to walk. The chivalry of an English woman probably saved his life. A few hours later her husband had to save it all over again. Gandhi was staying with an Indian friend. At dark the mob had surrounded the house; and this time they meant business. The chief of police had one of his detectives, disguised as an Indian trader, slip into a side door carrying a policeman's uniform for Gandhi. He was to put it on without delay and follow the detective to a carriage that was waiting. Gandhi did not want to run away. But the detective made him realize that more than his own life was at stake. Unless he left the house instantly, it would be burnt down and the women in it endangered. He put a plate on top of his head, wrapped a Madrasi scarf around it so that it would look like a policeman's helmet and, dressed in the regulation uniform, he made his escape. Meanwhile, the chief of police was entertaining the crowd with songs and jokes. Among the songs was "Hang Old Gandhi to a Sour Apple Tree." When he was sure the man they wanted was safe in the police station, he informed the mob that for twenty years they had been paying him, the officer, to uphold the law and that he had only done his duty by playing this trick on them and interfering with their lynching party.

Gandhi was urged on all sides to prosecute the offenders. But he refused, explaining, "This is a religious question with me." After all, the mob had been misinformed as to what he was trying to do. Later, many of his attackers became ashamed. His good sportsmanship was becoming a byword. It was soon to make him known even in England.

When the Boer War broke out toward the end of the century, many Indians considered it politically prudent not to assist the English. Gandhi was determined not to take an unfair advantage. "If we desire to win our freedom," was his plea in recruiting speeches, "and achieve our welfare as members of the British Empire, here is a golden opportunity for us to do so by helping the British in the war by all the means at our disposal." Before long he had an ambulance corps under him including more than

a thousand Indians. He and many of his followers were glad to do the most menial work in this emergency, if need be the scavenger work of sweepers. Often they carried the wounded on stretchers all day. Many times they risked their lives. Gandhi helped carry the son of Lord Roberts on a stretcher for nearly twenty miles. No matter how fatigued and fed up everybody was, his good humor became contagious. The gallantry that he and his fellow countrymen displayed was a revelation to those English who had pictured all Indians as slovenly and cowardly, merely a subject race coming from a "low-lying country." For his bravery under fire, Gandhi was given a medal. Lady Roberts sent him a package of food with her compliments. It contained eggs, which he refused, stating with possibly conscious humor, that his religion forbade his eating anything that had life in it.

Again, when the black or pneumonic plague hit Johannesburg, he threw himself into the center of danger. Twenty-five Indians caught it. Co-operating with the medical authorities, Gandhi cleaned out a shed and with a few friends stayed up with his patients night after night. One of his nurses and twenty out of the twenty-five patients died. But the disease was kept from spreading.

On several other occasions he again demonstrated his desire to go the second mile with the British government in an emergency. He still thought that the British Empire existed for the welfare of the world. During the Zulu uprising he raised another volunteer ambulance corps. As a sergeant major, he led marches of nearly forty miles a day. The white men did not want to give aid to the black prisoners. But to Gandhi it was a joy to wash their wounds and show them kindness. Many of them, he found, had been flogged. The sores had been festering in some cases for nearly a week without treatment. Thoroughly, tenderly, he gave these embarrassing prisoners personal attention. Colonels who a few years ago had bitterly opposed him expressed surprise at his spirit and became friendly. Once more he was decorated.

At the height of the extensive campaign that he later conducted to free Indians from insulting legislation, the government was confronted with a serious strike on the part of the railroad work-

ers. Rather than take advantage of "the enemy" when in an awkward position, Gandhi ordered his men to cease operations against the government until the strike should be settled. Gandhi's passion for respecting while resisting his opponents was incorrigible.

The moral muscles that later proved so efficient in Gandhi's struggle against injustice were first developed in an unceasing battle within himself for self-reliance. By learning to stand on his own feet he acquired strength to stand against European injustice in South Africa and later against a whole empire in India.

Early in the game he began to push self-reliance to almost amusing extremes. First, he installed in his home a thirty-five-dollar hand mill by which he ground his own flour and baked his own unleavened bread. Then he decided to do his own laundering, with the ludicrous result that on one occasion the starch dropped off his collar in the court room. When his fellow attorneys laughed, he laughed with them. Ruthlessly he continued the process by purchasing a barber's clippers and cutting his own hair with the help of a mirror.

His colleagues of the bar held their sides: "Gandhi, what have the rats been doing to the back of your head?" But the joke was turned on them. The white barber would not cut his hair without animosity. That was why he had to do it himself.

When his wife was to have a baby, Gandhi in preparation bought a book, *Advice to a Mother*. When the time came he took the place of midwife and doctor. He claims that he was not nervous.

His self-help was practice for helping others. One day a leper came to his house. Gandhi offered him shelter in his own home, and dressed his sores. It was finally necessary to send the patient to the hospital. For nearly two hours each morning for about a year Gandhi did volunteer work in the hospital, evidently with a view to identifying himself intimately with those who suffer.

For several years he ran a weekly newspaper, *Indian Opinion*. Every article that he contributed seems to have been a discipline in self-restraint and independent thinking. Not a paragraph, he afterward stated, contained a single statement aimed merely at

pleasing the reader, or included anything except the exact truth as he saw it. The purpose of the paper was to awaken the Indians to self-respect and loyalty in their struggle for justice. To keep it going, he sometimes put into it as much as three hundred and seventy-five dollars in one month. On a long railway journey to the office in Durban, he became absorbed in Ruskin's *Unto This Last* which a friend had put into his hands. The book touched off something in his mind that had been waiting for just such a challenge. He did not sleep that night. Next morning Gandhi set forth his plan to the office workers of *Indian Opinion*. Those who were willing would move to a farm and there they would practise some of the principles of Ruskin. The good of one would be the good of all; all services would rate the same. Everybody would work with his hands and receive fifteen dollars a month.

Soon he bought nearly one hundred acres, and the community called "Phoenix" was under way. There were orange and mango trees, and also innumerable snakes! The farm was fourteen miles from Durban. Those joining the experiment must live with the utmost simplicity. If they wanted to visit the city for pleasure, they could walk there and back in one day.

When the type was locked up for the first issue of the paper from its new headquarters, Gandhi discovered that the new machine refused to work. He found a substitute apparatus that could be operated by hand. It required a tremendous amount of muscle, but Gandhi was proud of his capacity for endurance. He woke up some carpenters who were on the place and rallied every able-bodied person to the job. By morning the issue was out, on time.

On this farm Gandhi installed his wife and children. From now on he put on himself and his team-mates increasing pressure. The children helped to make their own shoes. There must not be only self-reliance. There must also be self-purification. Slowly there had come to Gandhi the conviction that to do the most efficient service for the community a man must be severe with himself and by self-punishment become free of everything approaching lust. For a year the founder gave up salt and pulse.

Since milk stimulated what for a time he considered to be carnal desire, he cut milk out of his diet. Ground nuts and fresh and dried fruit such as the poorest fellow-Indian could afford were enough for him. Even so, "the relish still pursued" him. With his wife he was determined to live as brother and sister.

Phoenix developed into a school for moral athletes. The head coach was especially hard on himself. If while teaching, he struck a snag, he frankly confessed his ignorance. Because one member of the team broke training, Gandhi fasted a whole week and kept his vow to have only one meal a day for more than four months.

All this sharp-edged self-discipline was soon to stand him in good stead. Two years after the community was started, in 1906, word came from the neighboring province of Transvaal that a bill was to be passed that threatened the existence as well as the honor of all Indians in South Africa, since it would probably be imitated by the other provinces. In a few hours Gandhi was back in Johannesburg speaking at a mass meeting in protest. To the Europeans this legislation seemed vital; it would, they thought, protect their racial integrity and standard of living. To the Indians it spelled ruin and degradation. For one thing, every Indian over eight years of age would have to leave his thumb prints with the government as if he were a criminal. They would be so discriminated against that eventually life would become intolerable and they would have to go back to an uncertain livelihood in India—which was just what the Europeans seemed to want. This being really an insult to Mother India, Indians must resist. But how? They had no guns. But then guns would only stiffen the opposition and spread the poison of the stupidity and hatred that was at the bottom of this insult. They would forge a new weapon, a weapon far more effective than the Maxim guns of the British. They would practise "passive resistance," and refuse to give their fingerprints.

How many would join in this holy crusade? Nearly everybody in that meeting of two thousand Indians offered to join. But there would be hunger and cold and the heat of the sun, and perhaps jail, deportation, and death. Did they understand that?

They did. Their conclusion was: "Very well then, let's begin. We will be perfectly honest about our intention. We will give notice to the government that we will resist this injustice by shedding nobody's blood but our own. Victory must come through our own voluntary sacrifice."

Eventually Gandhi was thrown into jail with a hundred loyal companions. From that time on, till the strange battle was over in 1914, he stood like that mountain full of iron high in California's Yosemite Valley that attracts to itself the lightning. Whenever the black thunder clouds gather, you expect to see white-hot electricity flashing and plowing into that rugged mountain peak which wears its scars like medals. In the same way, the storm's wrath fell on Gandhi. But he did not mind. Once he had to sleep on the floor in solitary confinement. Jailed time after time he enjoyed the chance to read Tolstoi, Ruskin, or the deeply rooted "Song of God" from his own land. For weeks in the evening he taught a Chinese Christian fellow prisoner the Bible in English. At first the blisters on his hands from digging and breaking rock caused trouble. In time his hands became callous and he rejoiced in perspiration. The food was unendurable but by organized protest Gandhi was finally able to get rice, butter, and bread suitable to Indian stomachs. Lest the latrines become a health menace, Gandhi cleaned them himself. The Europeans, who had not looked for such determination, found that their jails became overcrowded. "Passive resistance" took the wind out of their sails.

Meanwhile, Gandhi was unhappy over that negative phrase. Trying to explain the philosophy back of his movement to a European, he realized that it gave the wrong impression. For one thing, this army of his was not passive. Its members were terribly active. Again, they refused to use violence not because they were weak but because they were strong. So a competition was announced in *Indian Opinion* for a better word. Someone suggested *"sadagraha."* It got the prize, but Gandhi changed it to *"satyagraha."* *Saty* means truth. *Agraha* means hanging on to, or firmness—or force. The soldiers in his peace army would henceforth be known as Satyagrahis. The new name quickly

became an emblem of sincerity combined with courage, simple living, and friendliness. No one could be a Satyagrahi and hate the Europeans, or do them harm. The harm must fall on himself alone. Nor could he give in to their dishonorable demands.

But the Satyagrahis needed another training ground. Phoenix was too far away. A European sympathizer turned over his farm, without rent, twenty-one miles from Johannesburg, for this purpose. Gandhi called it Tolstoi Farm. It was here that the victory was finally won. Young and old, men and women, practised on those eleven hundred acres the use of their weapons of sincerity, courage, simple living, and friendliness. Day after day it was impressed upon them that to injure another was to injure oneself and the whole world; but to obey unjust laws was unmanly. Their sword of the spirit would one day bless both Indians and Europeans. Those who would wield it are strangers to disappointment or defeat. Since it was assumed that they would all land in jail, they prepared themselves by stiff manual labor and an austere diet: no drugs, no tobacco, no liquor, no meat. Their preparation was not in vain. Some of those recruits suffered imprisonment again and again. Women Satyagrahis, in some cases, did three months' hard labor.

Religious intolerance was taboo. Moslem, Hindu, and Christian children studied and farmed together. Gandhi encouraged them all to remain faithful to their own religion. To a young Moslem he gave private lessons from the Koran. When the Moslems went without food during daylight for the month, according to their religious custom, the non-Moslems co-operated by skipping lunch. They all slept on wooden pillows. The community made their own shoes and in other vigorous ways sustained themselves. In not one case was a doctor called in.

Outside, the tension had been steadily increasing. General Smuts finally gave the assurance that the objectionable law would be repealed if only the Indians would voluntarily submit their fingerprints so that no undesired Indians would be smuggled into the Transvaal. Since Gandhi always goes out of his way to trust his opponent, believing that distrust is a symptom of weakness and a denial of Satyagraha, he persuaded the resisters

to do as the government asked and register their fingerprints as an act of chivalry. At a big public meeting Gandhi announced that he himself would be the first to register. Whereupon a Pathan (whose people are noted for their ferocity) stood up and declared that he would kill the first man thus to surrender. At the appointed time Gandhi was walking down the road toward the government office. The Pathan, with two or three others, came up to him angrily.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"To the registry office to give my fingerprints." The Pathan's answer was a blow with a big stick on Gandhi's head. Then he kicked and beat the prostrate figure in the road.

When he came to consciousness, witnesses offered to testify in court against his attacker; but Gandhi, although scarcely able to speak, insisted that the case be dropped. He was nursed for more than a week in the house of an Englishman, who became one of his most loyal friends.

Months later, when it was obvious that General Smuts had no intention of repealing the Black Act, Gandhi summoned those registering to throw their certificates of registration into a bonfire as a symbol that they would disobey the law to the finish. The Pathan worked his way through the crowd and before them all begged Gandhi's forgiveness. "But I forgave you," said Gandhi, "as soon as I woke up the time you hit me."

The loyalty and stamina of the Indians were a continued shock to their jailors. A seventy-year-old Indian, who had been indentured and who was deeply touched by Gandhi's demand that the fifteen-dollar poll tax on ex-indentured Indians be lifted, declared he was willing to die in prison for the cause. He did. From jail they buried the Satyagrahi's worn-out body. Prison hardships took toll of other lives, including a girl in her teens.

To be jailed was now a token of honor. A band of women marched to a mine in Natal and persuaded the indentured miners there to drop their tools and refuse to co-operate with a government that was going to tax every grown-up member of their family fifteen dollars. Sugar-cane workers also went on strike and asserted their self-respect.

Then came the climax. Gandhi invited all Indians who could stand the test to join him and go on a great trek from Natal across the Transvaal border, a strictly illegal act. Something like two thousand persons filled his ranks. More than a hundred were women, some with babies in their arms. They proposed to march twenty-five miles a day until they covered the two hundred miles to Tolstoi Farm. But of course the authorities would have to arrest them en route. The daily rations consisted of about a pound of bread and an ounce of sugar, and even these were not certain. Only suffering was guaranteed.

The morale was marvelous. One mother's child was drowned while the army crossed a river. "We must not spend time in mourning, we must keep going," she said. Those women had reason to endure. If they were defeated, their marriages would be illegal in the eyes of the law that gave no sanction to non-Christian marriages.

Gandhi's strategy was to aim at the white man's better nature. "The English," he later said in effect, "like to see you stand up to them. They are afraid of nothing physical, but they are in terror of their conscience." Englishmen in the home country and the viceroy in India were beginning to demand that these Indians who refused to kill or lie down be given a chance.

Implacably, soul-force was winning. At last, after seven years of infinitely patient struggle, non-violent coercion broke the last defense of General Smuts. The crushing poll tax of fifteen dollars was cancelled. Indians in the Transvaal were to be registered in a less offensive manner. Their marriages, whether Hindu or Moslem, were to be legalized. Indians in other ways were to be treated with equality before the law. Some of the barriers against the immigration of educated Indians were broken down. A decision was reached honorable to both sides. An atmosphere of understanding dispelled much of the old prejudice.

A community of thirteen thousand Indians, for the most part illiterate, led by a man who kept insisting "our only weapon is faith in God" had demonstrated that metal swords in comparison are childish and weak.

8

"WITHIN AN INCH OF WINNING"

South Africa might be familiar ground, but India no longer was. Something, he knew not what, "impelled" Gandhi to go to India. Returning home, he traveled third class by way of England. The war had broken out and mines in the channel were already a problem when Gandhi's ship reached port.

For the third time he stood by the British guns. He sensed the inconsistency between his creed of non-violent adherence to Truth and army ambulance work. During peace time he had often pocketed insults from the British. In this crisis he would swallow all scruples regarding their use of the war-method. The British fleet was protecting him. Since he accepted that protection, he was participating in its potential violence. The British constitution deserved his loyalty. He was a citizen of the Empire. Would it not be craven to knife it in the back now? Gandhi seemed to have few illusions about the difference between being a stretcher bearer or nurse for the wounded in battle and going out as a soldier to kill. Morally, he realized, combatant and non-combatant service were on about the same level. What appealed to him was apparently the chance of proving to the British the fitness of Indians to govern themselves. If the Indians refused to take advantage of the British in peril, then the British might be won over to grant the Indians self-government after the war.

There were politically-minded Indians in England to whom such sportsmanship sounded sentimental. Britain's adversity was India's opportunity. Why be a fool and help the enemy? But Gandhi decided to give the British the kind of "help" they wanted: loyalty to their war machine. He joined the ambulance service and persuaded many others to enlist. His efforts were so strenuous that he came down with pleurisy and was ordered to India to recuperate. Even during the latter part of the war he was ardently pro-Empire. After his convalescence, his recruiting work —this time for combatant as well as for ambulance service—took him on long marches through the villages. On duty he contracted

dysentery and almost died. Some of the 800,000 Indian soldiers transported overseas were at the front in response to his propaganda. He confesses that his participation in war left him groping in the dark. Late in 1936 his secretary wrote me from Wardha: "Gandhi would certainly take the absolutist stand against war, should an occasion arise." But at that time he did not consider himself qualified to go to jail as a conscientious objector.

Then came the Armistice and Britain's chance. The Indians had poured out a good three-quarters of a billion dollars and some of their best blood in behalf of British "democracy." Surely, in answer, the British would play cricket and grant some measure of independence! Britain's reply was a shock to India's seething nationalism. The Rowlatt Act came like a bomb from the air! Indian patriots could be jailed without trial by jury; their homes could be searched for evidence of sedition, without the usual legal safeguards. Gandhi pondered over these repressive measures, and then called a strike. For one day shops were to be closed, students were to be absent from classes. Everybody was to assemble in a public place and discuss this matter.

In the land of the Sikhs, the fighters with the great yellow turbans, there were disturbances. The British, on edge, jailed Gandhi and kept him from speaking at a scheduled meeting. Then the British nervously recalled the mutiny three generations back. An Irish general gave the orders that no Indians would be allowed to congregate in Amritsar, where the Sikhs have their golden temple. The Indians assembled anyway. Quite probably most of them knew nothing whatever about General Dyer's orders. Somewhere around six to ten thousand of them packed themselves into a vacant place that was walled in on two or three sides. The General in his excitement was convinced that they were out to do violence, and that many were armed. His blood was up over the reported insult to British women in the vicinity, and he had heard of a small massacre on the part of these inflamed nationalists. Britain had taken India with the sword and she would keep it with the sword. He would put a quietus on this

uprising once and for all and strike terror into these natives, he reasoned.

The shooting lasted perhaps ten minutes. There were children as well as screaming women in that helpless crowd, helpless because the only exit was over human bodies. When the shooting was over, the General, so it is stated on rather good authority, would not permit Red Cross assistance to the wounded. In any case, there were perhaps more than a thousand who needed medical attention, to say nothing of the three hundred or more who were dead. The General believed in doing a thorough job. For several days from that time on any Indian attempting to go down a certain street would have to crawl on his belly. The Amritsar blunder happened in April, 1919.

A Hindu scholar in Bombay leaning over backward in the effort to be moderate assured me six months later that it was "an Irish problem." If the General had not been a hotheaded victim of the "shillalah tradition," the skies would now be clear. But unmistakably the skies were red. It was a problem involving the whole Empire. This was brought home to me when I was a visitor at Tagore's school. The poet, for all his tranquil dignity, boiled over: "The English have absolutely shattered their moral prestige." He was handing back his knighthood.

At that time Gandhi was emerging as a leader to put the Indians on their own feet, but hardly any foreigner recognized how far his leadership would go. He had already said a permanent farewell to British arms. But nobody, perhaps not even Gandhi himself, had any idea of the scare he was going to give Britain with weapons of his own forging.

Gandhi had now at least three counts against the British. They had given the Indians to understand that a generous measure of self-government would be granted if they co-operated during the war. The Rowlatt Act was proof that Britain still meant to hold the reins in her own hands no matter how unconstitutionally. As for the Amritsar massacre, it seemed plain now to him that the British were determined to cover up this brutality as long as possible instead of acknowledging it in the open. The House of Lords was making a hero out of General Dyer. An excited group

of British citizens had given him a jewelled sword and an incredible gift in money. Third, the British were not keeping their word to the Moslems. When their backs had been to the wall and they wanted the support of as many of Mohammed's followers as they could get, they had promised that the religious and temporal head of Islam, the Khalif, who was also Sultan of Turkey, would remain in power. And now Britain was acting as if no such pledge had been given. The British government was truly "Satanic," announced Gandhi (with unprecedented and perhaps unjustified bitterness). The spokesmen for the seventy million Moslems agreed. So did the Hindu, Sikh, Christian, and Parsee nationalists.

Thirty-seven years before, a British official in India had instructed his orderly to push a young dark-skinned attorney out of his office. That incivility was a turning point in Gandhi's life. It rudely opened his eyes to the arrogance of foreign rule. Today he would not acquiesce to that assumption of superiority. He had the ear of hundreds of millions of fellow-countrymen, many of whom had likewise smarted under British snobbishness and smugness. A surprising number had had experiences like the merchant who had been forced out of his first-class railway compartment or the M.A. student who had been unpardonably snubbed by the white magistrate. And anybody who had eyes to see could recognize what the British occupation was doing to the people. They were being bled white, so that the foreigner could live in luxury, and swank around with the pride of the conqueror. The costly army that was supposed to protect the Indians from "hostile tribes" was the Britisher's way of saying that the Indians were not fit to take care of themselves. Gandhi would not forcibly remove 165,000 British troops as a British official had once forcibly removed him out of his presence. But he would initiate a campaign to secure justice, freedom, and self-respect. There were over three hundred million Indians. There was no limit to their power. It was their country. Why, if they all were to spit at the same time, the foreigners would all be drowned! Gandhi did not express this idea so inelegantly, but he showed that if enough Indians refused to give in to the British they could render their

administration helpless. They would fight for Indian freedom now—but not by killing.

The resistance was launched with a straightforward announcement. Gandhi called it "non-violent non-co-operation." British injustice must be hated, but British individuals must be respected. Everybody could take part. Non-violence was meant not only for the holy men; it was for the people. They should think of themselves not as lumps of flesh but as souls capable of rising triumphant above every national weakness and defying the physical combination of the whole world.

The program was audaciously concrete. Every Indian who had received a ribbon or knighthood should renounce this symbol of oppression; Gandhi himself returned all his medals. The man who once taught his pupils to sing "God save the king" now ordered that pupils in government schools should henceforth have nothing to do with those schools. Lawyers should refuse to argue before British officials: altercations would have to be adjusted by arbitration apart from the British regime. Hindu soldiers should get out of the army. Merchants must stop selling cloth made in England. Nobody should buy such cloth.

Cotton cloth becomes literally a burning issue. If it has been made in English mills, the patriotic thing now is to throw it into the fire. Destructive? But understand this background. Years ago India, so Gandhi preaches, perhaps sentimentally, was relatively well off. The people made their own clothes. In one locality a weaving industry had flourished. Then came the British with their swords and imported cloth. The local weaving stopped. Indians no longer sat before their spinning wheels stringing out the long cotton thread, nor did they depend on their own efforts in front of the loom. What cotton they grew they shipped to England on British boats. In the Lancashire mills that cotton was turned into cloth and then shipped back to the country from which it had been taken. But the poor people paid for it through their noses. And the more connection they had with Britain, the poorer they became. Gandhi was not against foreign trade: he was against exploitation. What was the sense, he asked, in

sending a bushel of wheat to England if in exchange an English soldier was sent back to India?

British rule was only devitalizing the people. In 1915 Gandhi had been able to procure a native spinning wheel only by organizing a search for one. A specimen was finally located among old useless furniture in a loft. But now, after five years, this simple machine, which any village carpenter could make at small expense, was to be the symbol of self-reliance on the flags of the tens of millions of Indian nationalists. Not only was it to be a symbol. Everybody in the movement had to operate a spinning wheel himself. There should be bonfires of imported cloth. But let no patriot stop with that negative gesture. Let him go on to make with his own hands the cap on his head, the shawl over his shoulders, and if he is ready to go that far, his loin cloth.

How deep is Gandhi's devotion to the spinning wheel may be sensed from the fact that four years later, when exhausted toward the end of his twenty-one days' fast, he was still doing his daily stint. The foreigner who has visited Ford's factory can make sarcastic remarks about Gandhi's emphasis on the spinning wheel. Certainly it is no panacea, but the outsider should at the same time remember that the machines that we naive Occidentals constructed to annihilate space may end up by annihilating us. The outsider should also understand that Gandhi is trying desperately to cut at the roots of poverty in India. He really believes that the crushing income of the poor peasants, which is no more than six or seven cents a day, is due in great part to British exploitation. To Western ears this may be nonsense. To Gandhi it is the sober truth, and he has his figures. Most of all, he has a solution. More than one hundred million peasants are idle from three to six months out of the year. If they can put in that time not only growing a few rows of cotton but also spinning it into yarn, they can earn in their otherwise unoccupied time the equivalent of almost five cents a day during that period. Instead of going into debt to buy loin cloths made in England, they can weave their own; and they can sell much of the cotton they make in the towns that used to depend on the Lancashire mills.

This boycott of cotton from England might look like war on

the people who make their living in the Lancashire mills. Actually, the cruelty was not what might have been expected. Because of the dole, the whole Empire rather than individual cotton mill workers had to bear the brunt of Gandhi's boycott. Non-violent non-co-operation applied to Lancashire-made cloth caused suffering but not death. If there is a single instance of an English child dying as a result of that boycott, the writer has not been able to get particulars. In any case, Gandhi was exerting not war-force but coercion without killing. This was a boycott, not a blockade —the force of folded arms rather than clenched fists.

The British could not very well answer this force with their machine guns. But they could lock up Gandhi's Satyagrahis. Thirty thousand went to jail. To the surprise of the officials, it became a badge of honor for an Indian to do his term. Women who prided themselves on the seclusion of the purdah made speeches, burned their pretty clothes, mastered the arts of spinning and weaving; and, when the time came, without a whimper accepted punishment as criminals. Students took pride in giving up their freedom behind prison walls in order that others might be free. Villagers who had never before had a picture in their homes now looked reverently at Gandhi's. All too rapidly he was becoming not only Mahatma, the Great-Souled One, but a god. When he would step out of the third-class carriage at the crowded railway stations the simplest people would bring their children to be healed. Merely to have him pass near them had the merit of a pilgrimage.

There is nothing in the world that can stop a tree that wants to grow. But that tree must have time. Gandhi's movement was pushed too fast. It therefore broke out here and there in violence, which gave the British an excuse for drastic action. In one section a mob of Moslems who had not been sufficiently disciplined in patience and soul-force, brutally burned to death some employees of the government. There were other outbreaks. Only a few thousand, it seemed, of Gandhi's followers could grasp his gospel: "My non-co-operation has its root not in hatred but in love."

When it struck the leader that the weakness of violence and hatred had not yet been uprooted from the hearts of his followers,

he did what he always tries to do with his pupils: he took upon himself the responsibility for their mistakes. Was not this failure of the masses to hang on to truth, the result of some failure deep within himself? In penance he would purify himself. The people had not been sufficiently trained for the struggle.

He and his colleagues had planned a second step in their campaign that was sweeping the whole land before it in a tidal wave of enthusiasm. In addition to the aims announced two years before, they were scheduling mass disobedience that would go as far as the refusal to pay taxes. The Moslems, still rankling over the Khalifat issue, were keen for further action. The hum of incredible numbers of spinning wheels in the villages was a portent. The British gave signs of not being able to cope with this unpredictable kind of opposition. But what if the people were not ready for soul-force? What if God was not in this commotion?

Agonizing over this question, Gandhi did an amazingly brave thing. He threw the movement into reverse. At the risk of being considered a fool or a coward by those whom he had set on fire with his passion for freedom, he announced to millions of his disciples that non-co-operation must for the time being cease. Victory might be in their grasp. But they were not fit for it. He knew that this might be poor politics but it was sound religion, because there was only one way to realize God and that was through non-violence. It might even be better to have the whole movement fail than to kill one Englishman.

For five days he fasted. In that time of quiet brooding he knew that he was right. Was this political suicide? Later events proved that through such a venture of trust Gandhi lost his political life to find it. Some die-hard nationalists spurned him. But the people sensed that here was a man after their own heart—a hero who was a statesman second and a saint first.

Then the British jailed him. Gandhi, although calling off the non-co-operation movement for the time being, had no intention of remaining silent. "We want to overthrow the government," he had written in his magazine. "We want to compel its submission to the people's will." The British Empire, he did not hesitate

to add, was "based on organized exploitation of the physically weaker races of the earth and upon a continuous exhibition of brute force." It was his prayer that India should remain non-violent till the struggle was won, but submission to Britain's demands was utterly impossible.

When Gandhi entered the courtroom the atmosphere was electric. Virtually everybody stood up. There was about the prisoner an awe-ful silence, as of power in reserve. Gandhi used words, but what was on his heart was too deep to be spoken. "I knew I was playing with fire," he admitted simply, "I ran the risk and if I was set free I would still do the same. . . . I wanted to avoid violence; I want to avoid violence. Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed. . . . But I had either to submit to a system which I considered had done an irreparable harm to my country or to incur the risk of the mad fury of my people bursting forth when they understood the truth from my lips. I know that my people have sometimes gone mad. I am deeply sorry for it, and I am therefore here to submit not to a light penalty but to the highest penalty. I do not ask for mercy, I do not plead any extenuating act. I am here, therefore, to invite and cheerfully submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me as the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, Judge, is either to resign your post or inflict on me the severest penalty."

One wonders what the judge was thinking. Was he, the official, re-enacting the rôle of Pilate? Was the defendant turning the tables and trying him? Was this unconquerable, frail, weather-beaten body about to be committed a long while to prison the embodiment of a force superior to the Empire that he, the judge, was representing? A chord deep within him vibrated to the spirit of the tranquil, fearless man on whom the imperial axe must fall. The judge looked into the deep brown eyes attractive with a fire that betokened a strange power. Humbly, not proudly, before the crowded courtroom the Englishman, not knowing what else to do, sentenced Gandhi to six years' imprisonment.

Many other Englishmen recognized the sincerity and potency

of Gandhi's spirit and program. After all, they themselves might have been drowned in their own blood had it not been for his insistence upon truth and coercion without killing. And they were alert enough to know that the force he was exerting was too effective to take flippantly. Of course, they argued, you can't govern a country with ideals, and that was all he stood for—just ideals. Yet somehow or other, for all his impracticality, he had a terrific hold on his people.

The former governor of Bombay afterward admitted that his opponent was "just a thin spindly shrimp of a fellow, but he swayed three hundred and nineteen million people and held them at his beck and call. He didn't care for material things. His program filled our jails. You can't go on arresting people forever, you know—not when there are three hundred and nineteen million of them. And if they had taken his next step and refused to pay taxes, God knows where we should have been. Gandhi's was the most colossal experiment in world history; *and it came within an inch of succeeding.*"

9

THAT VERY IMPORTANT WORD: "NO!"

Saint Paul had his breathing spells in jail. In jail Saint Francis had a chance to think things over. The three contemporary heroes of this book have likewise been imprisoned or caged behind barbed wire. If the diameter of one's halo depended upon the length of time one spent in jail, Gandhi's would surpass them all.

Sentenced to six years' imprisonment in the spring of 1922, he was to be released by a less hostile labor government not quite two years later. What was he doing? We can guess that not one hour was wasted. He writes. He spins with a portable spinning wheel. He also makes some useful improvements on it. Traveling patriots from now on will have no alibi for leaving behind this machine-symbol of India's self-reliance and freedom, and doing their stint of cotton yarn. But the great thing that happens

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi
Sets the pace

is Gandhi's increasing clarification of mind. The epigram comes later, during his trip through Europe; but the reality is already becoming crystal clear: The English language contains a very important word, spelled with two letters. The word is "No"!

The time soon comes when Gandhi, with a power that must have been enhanced by his meditations in jail, says such an emphatic "No!" with his stomach that India will never be quite the same again.

Since youth he has disciplined himself never to hate anybody. His aim now is so to live satyagraha or love-force that it will become contagious. But in 1924 the very people who should be most completely united are engaged in a daily dogfight. From place after place come reports of what the Hindus and Moslems are doing to each other. These outbreaks of violence are proof to Gandhi that he was right in suspending the non-co-operation movement. There must be more self-purification among those who want freedom, especially among the Hindus and Moslems. It is their hatred that needs to be shed and not their blood! He will bring them together by his own suffering, punishing himself for their weakness.

No one who has not lived a while in India before the great fast of 1924 can easily understand the thickness and height of the wall that separated Hindus and Moslems. When the followers of Mohammed worship in their mosques they like quiet. But certain Hindus at the moment their Moslem brothers enter the mosque sometimes parade in front of the mosque and make all manner of noises. They could beat their cymbals and shout at other less exasperating times and the Moslems very well know it. They also know that there is a sure way to drive pious Hindus wild, and that is to slaughter sacred cows. Now the Moslem in Palestine and elsewhere is content to use sheep and goats in his religious sacrifices. Not so the Moslem in India. On certain occasions nothing will do but a cow. The reason why is left to the reader's imagination; also the results. Gandhi was alarmed at the rate the feud was developing. Something drastic had to be done. Verbal pleas were not enough.

Toward the end of his stay in jail he had submitted to an appen-

dix operation. He was exceedingly weak in body. Meanwhile, the Hindus and Moslem antagonists had to come to their senses. A huge conference was called; three thousand Hindus and one thousand Moslems attended. For days they argued, but the common ground discernible to their humorless eyes was still too small to stand on.

Then Gandhi hit them at their most vulnerable spot. Leaving the argumentation he retired to a friend's home in Delhi to fling himself into what was perhaps the most gigantic experiment of his life.

Many of us Occidentals imagine that at church suppers we are eating our way toward the Kingdom of God, whereas we may only be digging our graves with our teeth. Then, becoming bilious (but we like to call it righteous indignation), we go prancing off on some credulous crusade. It is otherwise with Gandhi. He cold-bloodedly advances his cause by making his stomach go on a sit-down strike. That is what he did, anyway, in the crisis of 1924.

For two nights he wrestled alone with himself. Talk seemed to be futile. Self-sacrifice might have an effect. To bring Hindus and Moslems together had been his increasing passion for nearly thirty years. But arguments back and forth were no use. What, then, was the divine will? He would find out and he would act on the insight at whatever cost. At last the answer came.

To atone for the weaknesses of the people he, their leader, would starve. The blame he would take on his own shoulders. If the price of pain had to be paid, he would pay it himself. He had faith that his body, emaciated though it was, could somehow stand the test. But his friends were not so sure. They reasoned with him. He made them a promise: he would take food if his strength could no longer endure.

If Kagawa passed through such an experience he might share some of his sensations in a novel. But Gandhi keeps a veil over most of the agony. An Englishman staying with him was able to read it only on the tortured face that for a moment was off guard. It will never be read in a book. I have a friend who underwent a two weeks' fast to serve the cause of medicine. He

had been captain of his college wrestling team and at the time of his fast was a theological student. Each afternoon until toward the close of his fast when they put him to bed, he would ride downtown to the hospital to be examined, and back again to the dormitory on the New York subway. He would come into my room upon returning, and then, lying on the bed, would describe his feelings at the sight of a baker's advertisement in the car, which by no force of will could he drive from his mind. Never was poet more lyric. That loaf of bread he made one see as if it were the face of his beloved.

Gandhi went without food for twenty-one days. All that he allowed his stomach was water, salt, and soda. It is said that after several days of this first big fast his doctors smuggled soluble food into the water he was drinking. Detecting it, Gandhi spit it out like poison. He did not lose his temper. But he was unmistakably indignant, even angry. On the twelfth day his friends held a council of war. Mahatmaji must not commit suicide. At this rate, he really could not last much longer. That recent operation was evidently too much of a handicap. He must stand by his agreement with them.

It was Gandhi's day of silence. He was under vow not to let words pass his lips. He therefore wrote his answer on paper: "Have faith in God." The friends kept on pleading. Gandhi silently wrote again: "You have forgotten the power of prayer."

Gandhi did not forget the power of prayer. When the nausea almost overwhelmed him he would have a friend read to him a passage like this from an ancient hymn that poor village peasants sing: "Offer first your life and your all; then take the name of the Lord. . . . God is the helper of the helpless and the strength of the weak." Is not the duty of the satyagrahi, in Gandhi's own words, to hang on till the bones of the wrist are broken? He would hang on thus.

This was too much for the quarreling Hindus and Moslems. They came together; they could not let the Great-Souled One die because of their sin. The riots stopped. Leaders pledged mutual tolerance.

On the twenty-first day of his fast Gandhi met his friends for

prayer in the light of the early morning stars. His voice was stronger than it had been. There was the sense of urgency but not haste. A favorite Hindu hymn was sung. "The way to God is for heroes only; it is not meant for cowards."

The fast was to be broken at noon. He insisted on a religious ceremony first. His voice was weak, his fund of energy about gone. But he thanked those who had taken care of him, with a tenderness that unforgettably humbled them. A Moslem priest—who had been close to Gandhi ever since they had prayed together in South Africa—read from the Koran. C. F. Andrews, who describes this scene, then sang a hymn dear to Gandhi's heart, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross." From the Upanishads a trusted Hindu recited, "May the Light Ever Shine Before Me." Then came the act of dedication.

Gandhi begged those gathered around him to give their lives if need be so that the Hindus and Moslems, under all their differences, might be one. Surely they could worship without interruption, each in his own way! As for himself, Gandhi would continue to starve if necessary, he would not even begin to sip the orange juice his friends were so eager to see him drink, until there should be solemn pledges insuring religious fellowship.

The pledges were given. That fast did not solve the Hindu-Moslem problem. But it helped to change the climate in India. If the policy of the alien government was "to divide and rule," that policy henceforth would meet an obstruction. Religionists who had enjoyed fighting one another had now the disconcerting picture vividly in their minds of a leader who, to overcome their bickerings, would lovingly in silent agony lay down his life. This weapon of self-purification through self-suffering India can understand. From now on Gandhi wields it with unexpected effectiveness.

In South Africa he had fasted a week to take upon himself the punishment for a colleague's guilt. For another offense against the morale of his farm he fasted for two weeks. It is reported that a boy in one of his schools did something definitely harmful to the spirit of the group. This strange disciplinarian called the boys together and explained the situation. Obviously, the breach of

faith had to be met with stiff treatment. The offender turned pale: the frost was racing up and down his back. When he heard Gandhi state exactly what the punishment was to be, he felt even more ill at ease.

"I, your teacher, must be at fault. If I were not weak in some way, thus setting a poor example, this wrong would probably not have been done. This is the punishment: I will go without food for two days."

Whether this incident is misreported or not, nothing is truer of Gandhi's spirit. When evil comes into a situation in which he is involved, he does not fly into a tantrum and blame the other fellow or the universe; he quietly steps forward and shoulders the burden, saying to himself: "There must be more truth and love here than there has been, and it must come from pain. I will undergo the pain myself."

Pathological egotism? Martyr complex? The asylums are full of people trying to run away from responsibility and always blaming everybody else. But Gandhi accepts responsibility and he dares to acknowledge his share of guilt. That is part of his secret of keeping sane. His answer to evil is strangely suggestive of Kagawa's reply, "If anyone does me a wrong, instead of trying to hurt him I will get underneath him and give my energy for him until I push him to a higher level than where I am standing." Gandhi's belief in non-violence springs from his assumption that "human nature in its essence is one." Therefore even Hitler and Mussolini may not be beyond redemption. He does not believe that to meet the dictators with non-violence would be playing into their hands. They might "respond to the advances of love." In any case, we are to treat them as though they could make a moral reply.

Gandhi's negations may strike the impatient Westerner as a needless denial of life. Sometimes they undoubtedly are. For example, his rule of chastity within marriage, taken after his four children were born, is an expression of asceticism that unhappily reminds one of the fanaticism of some second- or third-century Christians. One of these emasculated himself. Several refused to bathe. Many considered the desire of mate for mate such an evil

thing that they themselves refused to marry. But such repression and fear of the body are not from the mind of Jesus. Religion should not, we think today, encourage a flight from the joys of normal life. Gandhi may not be so extreme in his austerities as some early Christians were. Yet there is no getting round the fact that Gandhi, to the Western way of thinking, carries his nay-saying too far within marriage. He seems to be sex-shocked.

But there are reasons. Dr. Albert Schweitzer, in *Indian Thought And Its Development,* seems to trace Gandhi's emphasis on celibacy back to Buddha. Abnormal experiences in boyhood probably have more to do with it. We must remember that he was thrown into the marriage relationship at such an early age that almost inevitably his vision of married love became discolored. Twelve, for all India's precocity, is too early a date for marrying. Again, when he was about fifteen years, he suffered an emotional wound from which, presumably, he has never recovered. Gandhi was nursing his father. But his father died late one night at the time the young husband was in his wife's arms. About forty years later he frankly admits that he has never been able to forgive himself. That memory has been festering deep within him. And it has distorted, so I believe, his whole attitude toward what, in marriage, can mean not degradation but enrichment of the spirit. But perhaps, apart from this emotional shock, it is a natural reaction for an Indian reformer who has been sickened by the spectacle of sacred temple prostitutes and child marriages, to set his face like flint against the kind of marriage that our Occidental institutes of family relations are now advocating. Having seen thousands of little shrines with their oiled stones pathetically dedicated to fertility, I can understand why a man with a passion for purity living in India can renounce direct sex expression once and for all. Admitting that Gandhi's demand in his "retreat" for abstinence from the marriage experience is a needless negative, we need not be blind to the value of his zeal for self-denial.

An Oriental greater than Gandhi once said: "If your eye offend thee pluck it out." Gandhi fearlessly applies this law. Once on a ship he found himself arguing heatedly with one of his best friends. The bone of contention was a pair of costly field glasses.

What was meant to extend the vision of these two friends was becoming dust in their eyes, a source of irritation.

"Throw those things away," said Gandhi.

"You mean it?"

"Yes, I mean it. Throw them into the sea right away."

The friend was a German. He was proud of those field glasses. But he saw what Gandhi was driving at. Without argument he tossed them irretrievably into the water.

Robert Louis Stevenson says that the great art is "to omit." Gandhi "omits" with a vengeance The result is not a pretty picture. But there may be a priceless beauty in it, and a rare power to move the wills of men.

Consider the art of living practised at his Ashram. An Ashram is a sort of religious, educational, and social settlement or retreat, where the members go into rigorous training so that their lives may be subdued to a design of enduring worth. Gandhi is an expert in such small-group fellowship. After his two experiments in South Africa, with the Phoenix and Tolstoi farms, he has become a confirmed believer in the daily discipline of a team sharing food, shelter, work, and inspiration together. His famous satyagraha or truth-force Ashram was founded near Ahmedabad in 1915. It was disbanded in 1933, when all the adult population in the Ashram marched to jail in response to his call of civil disobedience. For many years it afforded a continuing source of power not only for Gandhi but for his whole movement. One source of that power seems to be the disciplined capacity to affirm life by denying self. Regarding the Ashram's prohibition of the marriage experience, we Occidentals can make legitimate criticisms. But are we so sure that the other don'ts are a mistake? Here are some:

No stealing; to receive what one does not vitally need is robbery.

No acquisitiveness; the possession of bare necessities is enough.

No self-indulgence in eating; liquor, tobacco, meat, and stimulants irrelevant to health are ruled out.

No lying; truth is God.

No violence toward any living thing; even jealousy, bitterness,

and the air of superiority are outlawed forms of violence. Retaliation is not permitted.

No contempt toward outcastes; are they not brothers?

But luxury, the mania of owning things, pampering of palate, falsehood, and ill-will toward all living things must go, only so that sharing, simplicity, self-reliance, sound health, veracity, and the family spirit can come in. The exciting thing is not what is given up but the life that is thereby gained. Saint Simeon of Stylites exhibiting his worms on top of a pillar would be unhappy at the Ashram. He would have to wash his loin cloth standing in the river Sabarmati while the little fishes nibbled at his legs. Unless he did his part with the spinning wheel, loom, hoe, milk pail, sweeper's broom, and hammer he would probably be heartily laughed at as a parasite. An Ashramite may not own too much property; on the other hand, he may not become too far separated from the world. He should become detached not so much from men as from fear. He must cut himself off from fear of caste, parents, hard work, *lathi* (stick) beatings, or death. God alone is to be feared. At four in the morning and in the late evening, He is to be encountered in common worship through Hindu and Christian songs, ancient scriptures, readings, group planning, and silent meditation. An American, writing of this fellowship with its twenty-four-hours-a-day attempt to practise the presence of God, ventures the opinion that while it lasted it generated more spiritual drive than any other training school on the planet.

Gandhi's Ashramites are trained to say "No" on one level in order that they may say "Yes" on a higher level. And to say "No," as William James has pointed out, is sometimes the highest achievement of the human will.

When Gandhi sets out to purify himself by refusing to eat or to pay taxes his purpose is not to show contempt for his opponents. It is rather to win them over. He denies co-operation on one plane in order to gain it on another and more human one. With this principle in mind, let us consider some of his other hunger strikes, which potently combine art and ethics.

Soon after returning to India, Gandhi helped to incite the cotton mill workers near Ahmedabad to fold their arms and discon-

tinue their wage slavery until they could exact juster treatment from their employers. To use such coercion troubled his conscience. Some of the mill owners were his friends. To starve himself in protest against their exploitation of the workers might be the same as compelling them to do his will. But that was not the main point. The main point was to encourage the strikers not to give in to exploitation, for they were in danger of quitting. So Gandhi announced, "Unless the strikers rally and continue the strike till a settlement is reached or till they leave the mills altogether, I will not touch any food." He carried through his threat, for three days. By that time the workers had rallied and shown their strength and the mill owners had changed their mind and made an adjustment with their employees. It seems that the capitalists were so delighted over Gandhi's survival that they not only met many of the workers' demands; they also distributed candy to all.

Little did India suspect what was to follow—a series of hunger strikes unprecedented in history. Some were quixotic, such as that fast when Gandhi lost, it is reported perhaps not accurately, six pounds within twenty-four hours and became so weak that he had to be carried on a stretcher because he had "demanded to share the agony" of a political prisoner. A professor friend, it seems, had asked permission while in jail to do the scavenger work of the Untouchables. Permission being denied him, the professor threatened to starve himself to death. In sympathy Gandhi offered his life also.

On another occasion, he again pulled out of its scabbard his strange sword of self-imposed hunger, this time against his own colleagues. During one of his tours in behalf of the Untouchables, Gandhi was met by angry high-caste Hindus holding up a black flag and shouting "Go back, Gandhi!" Some young bloods of his party who had not yet absorbed their leader's chief idea, used violence on one of the "enemy." They did not kill their opponent, but they left a few black and blue marks on the Brahmin's body. Gandhi, hearing of this breach of discipline and faith, immediately began to purge his spirit with a seven-days' fast.

Quite possibly the greatest achievement of his life is what he

did on an empty stomach in 1932. A doctor once prescribed to Sydney Smith that he walk on an empty stomach. "Whose?" asked the willing humorist. Gandhi would say, "Mine! Let the world go forward over *it*." The Indian world advanced perceptibly in 1932 because of his near "fast unto death."

The events leading up to this climax are mostly related to the problems of Indian unity and Untouchability. It will be recalled that the 1919-21 campaign was ostensibly for freedom from British rule. But other objectives were the restoration of the almost lost arts of spinning and weaving in order that the poor might help support themselves, the reconciliation of Hindus and Moslems, the abolition of the liquor and drug traffic, child marriage, and Untouchability. After Gandhi's twenty-one-day fast in 1924, he threw himself into social and religious reform, neglecting political work. More and more he sought to identify himself with the millions who were born as outcastes or Untouchables. Their numbers have been estimated from thirty-five up to sixty millions.

But in 1929 he was drawn back into the swiftly moving political current. At the National Congress of the year before, Gandhi joined Jawaharlal Nehru, a young left-wing nationalist, in sending this ultimatum to the British: By January 1, 1930, the Indians must have at least as much self-government as Canada. But the British thought otherwise. So, in January, 1930, Gandhi sent a long letter to Lord Irwin, the viceroy, stating that he would set loose another non-violent, non-co-operation movement, the aim being independence, unless the British would meet India's legitimate demands. The British rule was a curse. It had impoverished India's dumb millions "by a system of progressive exploitation." Was not the viceroy getting nearly $25,000 a year? But the farmer on whose back he was riding had to do with five or six cents a day. And even then he was taxed every time he took salt. The people would not tolerate this state of affairs much longer. He, Gandhi, would do what he could to direct their protests into non-violent channels. But the protest could not be dammed up forever. To resist with non-hating, non-killing methods might seem a "mad risk," but he would take it.

In answer, the British declared the Indian National Congress

and its working committee to be illegal. It determined to stamp out this "rebellion."

Gandhi was no less determined. In February he placarded the rules for winning independence: no killing or hurting or cursing; no insults. (If an opponent is insulted, a Satyagrahi should protect him even at the risk of his own life.) On the other hand, no yielding, no obeisance to the Union Jack nor submission if the British come to take your property away from you.

On March 12, Gandhi, leaving his Ashram after a hymn, with more than seventy disciples, led a spectacular march, which continued for nearly twenty-five days, to the sea. Every day they did their allotment on their spinning wheels. The government was taking from the people twenty million dollars a year by salt taxation; the objective of this march was to smash that monopoly. As soon as he reached the sea Gandhi would take up in his own hand some untaxed and therefore prohibited salt in defiance of the whole British Empire.

When this peace army arrived at the seashore and the Dandi salt pits, their bare feet were cut by the sharp cactus spines that had been strewn over the approaches by the authorities. Gandhi stooped over and picked up a handful of the forbidden crystals. It was a gesture toward liberty like our own American Revolutionists spilling tea in Boston Harbor. But those rebelling used no muskets. Some Satyagrahis were beaten senseless by the police. From then on it was a mass "pilgrimage to the prison-house." Gandhi himself was jailed in May.

His defiance kept marching on, more vigorously than in 1921. Village after village refused to pay taxes. Indian officials refused to co-operate with the foreign administration. Thousands upon thousands of patriots accepted the *lathi* blows of the police without retaliation. Perhaps the most significant resistance was shown by the women.

Dignified ladies who had "kept purdah," never allowing any men except immediate relatives to see their faces, now boldly picketed drug and liquor shops. They hoped by so doing to reduce the revenue of the British government more than eighty-five million dollars a year. Their method of persuading Indians not to buy

liquor or opium spelled definite loss to the government. Women also picketed the shops that sold foreign cloth, hour after hour urging fellow Indians not to patronize those shops. Gandhi next year in England described an unlettered woman taking the *lathi* blows on her head and bleeding profusely while she stood unflinching, ordering her comrades not to move from their posts. She converted the little town of Borsad into a kind of Thermopylae.

Early in January, 1931, there was a truce. Gandhi was released. In March an agreement was signed at Delhi between Gandhi and the viceroy. Indians by the seashore could make their own salt, untaxed. Shops could be picketed. Political prisoners could walk out of jail as free men and their property would be returned. Some offensive ordinances would be repealed. In return Gandhi called off the Civil Disobedience movement.

In the autumn he was called to a second Round Table Conference, in London, to work out with the British a plan for enlarging the suffrage and self-government of the Indians. For three months the debate or attempt at agreement continued. To the British the issue seemed simple. The Moslems and Sikhs were separate communities; they were to have separate electorates. Why not the thirty-five to sixty million Untouchables?

"But," insisted Gandhi, with perhaps some political prejudice, "that would perpetuate Untouchability. It would make a cleavage between the Untouchables and the other Hindus that would undo all we are now trying to do. If the Untouchables were thus cut off from the Brahmins and other caste Hindus, they would be persecuted with extra fury and the Hindu community would be split."

A few days after his return to India, Gandhi was arrested for resisting an ordinance, passed during his absence, which he considered utterly unjust to the farmers.

Then, in the late summer of 1932, came Ramsay MacDonald's award. Quite possibly the Prime Minister considered it agreeable to Gandhi. But the terms were such that Gandhi felt obliged to resist as he had vowed months before, "with his life." That meant only one thing, another fast. It was not so much directed against England's plan of separate electorates as against the division among the Hindus. If by starving himself he could induce the

caste Hindus and the Untouchables to come together and agree among themselves, the situation would be saved.

It may all sound incredible, but this is what happened. Gandhi's act touched off the conscience of India and pointed it at the plight of the Untouchables. The fast continued only six days and five hours. Then Gandhi, still alive, sipped lime juice. But, in the judgment of C. F. Andrews, "the moral pressure of his self-imposed fast accomplished in a single week what could not have been achieved by ordinary processes in a hundred years." By the coercion of self-suffering high-caste Hindus were led solemnly to pledge themselves to wipe out Untouchability. In many places formerly smug wearers of the triple cord now agitated for these revolutionary changes: let caste and outcaste people eat together; let the Untouchables enter the temples; let the Untouchables use the public wells and streets and schools. The fast resulted in an outstanding political gain. The award was finally changed so that the Untouchables received nearly twice as many reserved seats in the various councils. But the significant outcomes were these: the Untouchables were not to be shunted off into a water-tight compartment from other Hindus, and many leading high-caste Hindus were now committed without reservations to the task of removing from India the curse of Untouchability. The All-India Anti-Untouchability campaign was organized and promoted. It was as if several influential preachers and a governor or two in our South had given their word of honor that if they could have their way, Negroes henceforth would have equal rights in elementary schools, in white churches, and in election primaries.

There is danger of exaggerating the effect but perhaps it is safe to say this: What preachments had failed to do, self-purification accomplished. Because a little man voluntarily endured nausea and water with a pinch of salt and soda in it for one hundred and forty-nine hours, millions of his brothers from that time on would not be compelled to endure quite the old insults and exclusions sanctified by the ingrowing prejudice of twenty-five hundred years. Willing to say "No" to his own life, a statesman-saint won for innumerable other lives the power to say "Yes."

10

"I AM A SCAVENGER"

THAT IS how Gandhi speaks of himself. He has no desire to be thought of as a "Big Man," a philanthropist who squeezes profits out of subordinates and then to win prestige, hands them a Christmas basket. Like another who accepted a shameful status long ago, he would rather be as one who waits upon others than as one who is waited upon.

"Power," concludes the historian, Lord Acton, "corrupts. Absolute power corrupts absolutely." Gandhi is free of the lust for power or attention for himself. He rarely, if ever, looks at himself in a mirror. It is only when he eats that he wears his false teeth; otherwise, he confesses, visitors might think him to be younger than he actually is.

"He particularly likes a joke on himself." All trace of pretentiousness seems to have been burned out of him. It must be because of this fundamental humility that C. F. Andrews writes of him: "I can only tell you that after twenty years' experience, I have never known in my life a more essentially truthful man, even in the smallest details."

For years he has craved to be one with the poorest of the poor in India. At last his dream is being realized. In a little out-of-the-way village called Segaon, several miles from a railroad station, where many of the inhabitants have or did have dysentery or malaria, he tries to live as a simple, poverty-oppressed villager. The hut has practically none of our Western comforts. When he writes, it is on the cheapest paper, the kind that is made and used by the neglected rural people. The pen is hand-made: Gandhi has to dip into the village-manufactured ink several times before he can finish one line. He eats sparingly, rarely anything more costly than what villagers can afford.

Out of this experience of sharing intimately with the masses he hopes to develop a practical program for lifting the economic level of India's exploited tenant farmers. Perhaps he also hopes to find himself ever more at home with life. Once he said that the

reason for serving fellow beings is in order "that we may see a glimpse of God through them, because they have the same spirit as we have, and unless we learn that, there is a barrier drawn between God and ourselves. If we want to demolish that barrier, the beginning is made by complete identification with our fellow-beings." This identification he is now enjoying, thoroughly enjoying. It is likely that never before has he experienced such downright happiness.

Gandhi's ordinary limitations imposed by physical frailness seem almost obliterated by his overpowering spiritual vitality, a vitality which grows from the tap root of a dedicated will. If it were possible to summarize his significance in one phrase, that one phrase might be "Will Power." Not in the sense in which the term is glibly used in our success magazines, but in the profound religious sense that all truly great leaders embody—a complete commitment of one's entire self to the highest that one sees. In the freedom that emerges from this abandonment of self, he can carry through an almost superhuman program.

Consider the pressure of this rather typical schedule of a few years ago. From the preceding Sunday night until this Monday evening he is supposed to rest. No word will pass his lips. It is now Monday morning. He writes letters and articles. Then he silently listens to interviewers, plying his spinning wheel at the same time. After sunset he breaks silence at eight o'clock. With his colleagues he plans action until 2:30 o'clock Tuesday morning. An hour's sleep and he is out of bed for morning prayers. The interviews begin again after the meditation and scripture reading under the stars. There are many speeches to be made and innumerable conversations dealing with the strategy of the movement. These continue till midnight. Then three and a half hours' sleep. Prayers. Interviews. The train early in the afternoon. One interview after another in rapid succession in the third-class car, where crying babies and crowded, loquacious travelers make concentration difficult. Speeches at nearly every station, or at least great throngs of people demanding a sight of their leader. No let up till ten o'clock that night. Then an article that has to be mailed

next morning for his magazine, *Young India.* But first it must be written.

An English woman in 1934 describes him in the Tamil country on an Untouchability campaign getting up every morning at three o'clock, then writing letters, then praying at 4:20 A.M.; then "work"; then breakfast. At 6:30 or 7:00 A.M. he is speeding over bumpy roads in a Ford. Some days he talks to the villagers ten times, traveling one hundred miles. For months on end it is bed at eleven, and up again at three, pouring out his life for the Untouchables, whom he calls Harijan, "the people of God." On one of his recent rapid-fire trips he tired out the younger men. It is a matter of shame with him if he looks or feels worn out.

In the light of this supreme passion to be identified with the lowly, and to be in constant touch with God, his blind spots and faults, some of which seem all to obvious, become less and less interesting. But let us frankly consider them.

The chief divisions of caste he justifies as if they were almost divinely ordained. He has his prejudices against Western ways of eating, Western medicine, and Western hospitals even though he once considered being a doctor and for several months in a hospital in South Africa he assisted the white doctor two hours a day.

Again, his proposed revival of home industry through the spinning wheel and old-fashioned loom may be good politics and for the time being fairly good economics, but does he accept the fact, as most of us do, that industrialism is bound to come to India? At any rate, his secretary has recently written from Wardha: "Gandhi believes in the social ownership of basic industry and in helping labor to organize themselves into unions. He is responsible for one of the best labor organizations in India—the labor union in Ahmedabad."

Another criticism some Westerners might make is that Gandhi is something of a philosophical, though unconscious, opportunist. When the Bihar region was badly shaken by an earthquake, he announced that the catastrophe was God's punishment upon India for the sin of Untouchability. The most extreme case is his action in the great war.

He had experimented with soul-force. He had demonstrated on a big scale its supremacy over sword-force. He had seen for himself the futility of the kind of violence that lies, hates, and kills wholesale. Yet what did he do when the crisis of 1914 came?

He acquiesced, like the fabled Indian hero who stood in his chariot on the eve of war in great perplexity. Should he gallop forward and shoot his arrows at the enemy? That would be to deny the love which was his meat and drink. What then should he do? The hero's god gives the smooth answer: "It is all right for you to go forth to battle. You have my sanction. We cannot be too consistent in this world." This paraphrase, I think, gives substantially the alibi the warrior of classical times was looking for. Perhaps it suggests the devious route by which Gandhi satisfied his conscience in 1914. At that time there seemed to be only two possibilities—to fight or to commit suicide. The third, running away, was ruled out. The fourth possibility, to resist the war-system and take the consequences, Gandhi let wriggle through his fingers. Why? Possibly because of that relativism which pantheistic Hinduism had helped to knit into his nervous system. To Gandhi there was so much evil in the world, such crushing of every type of life, that a few murdered men here and there seemed of comparatively small importance. In other words, his world view was a bit unfocused. Life was pretty much on the same level. So why insist on an absolutist position?

At the Round Table conference in London, Gandhi reportedly admitted that, although he wanted the army in India free from British control, it would be useful—if under Indian control. "When I heard that," confesses an absolute pacifist of Ireland, "I realized that Gandhi is a man to admire but not to follow."

It may be that disillusionment has at last made Gandhi unequivocally strong in his repudiation of army-force. The following interview between Gandhi and Kagawa, early in 1939, implies this. His Japanese guest pressed him to declare what he would do if he were in Kagawa's place.

"I would declare my heresies and be shot," Gandhi replied. "I would put the co-operatives and all your work in one scale, and put the honor of your nation in the other; and if you found that

the honor was being sold, I should ask you to declare your views against Japan and in so doing make Japan live through your death. But for this, inner conviction is necessary. I do not know that I should be able to do all that I have said if I were in your position, but I must give you my opinion since you have asked for it."

"The conviction," said Kagawa, "is there. But friends have been asking me to desist."

"Well, don't listen to friends when the Friend inside you says, 'Do this.' And friends, however good, can sometimes well deceive us. They cannot argue otherwise. They would ask you to *live* and do your work. The same appeal was made to me when I took the decision to go to jail. But I did not listen to friends, with the result that I found the glow of freedom when I was confined within the four solid walls of prison. I was inside a dark cell, but I felt that I could see everything from within those walls, and nothing outside."[1]

To some Chinese also visiting the Madras Missionary conference, Gandhi was equally unambiguous: "Immediately you get the conviction that non-violence is the law of life, you have to practise it towards those who act violently towards you, and the law must apply to nations as to individuals. Whilst you may not try to wean people from war, you will in your person live non-violence in all its completeness and refuse all participation in war. You will develop love for the Japanese in your hearts . . . in spite of their misdeeds. . . . You will serve friend and foe alike with a reckless disregard of danger. . . . If by chance some Japanese soldiers or airmen fall into the hands of the Chinese and are in danger of being lynched by an infuriated Chinese mob or otherwise ill-treated, you will plead for them with your own people and if necessary even protect them with your life."[2]

We like to think that if the bands began at home and bombs were dropped near Segaon, Gandhi would continue to rely on soul-force. But we do not absolutely know. It is no service to

[1] *Harijan,* Poona, January 21, 1939.
[2] *Harijan,* Poona, January 28, 1939.

Gandhi to picture him as incapable of sometimes blurring ethical distinctions.

And yet, for all these seeming blind spots, Gandhi looms before us as that great mountain Kinchinjunga in the Himalayas. You sit in silent wonder on your little Tiger Hill, only eight thousand feet high, as you watch the rising sun of Truth reddening the top of that bleak summit twenty thousand feet higher, fluttering its banner of timeless, wind-blown snow. India's Great Soul is like that: rugged, towering.

Gandhi for a time may fail as Another nineteen hundred years before him failed, to win his nation to a sustained program of non-violence. Not long after Jesus cried on the cross, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do," the streets of Jerusalem became rivers of blood—the blood of blind and angry nationalists, who preferred to meet the Romans on Caesar's level of sword-force rather than on Jesus' level of soul-force. It is conceivable that the young nationalists may reject Gandhi's leadership in India. A small group of them—the unproved story goes—did visit him once with the evident intention of putting him out of the way. The genial but firm little man's answer silenced them: "You can kill me," he said in effect, "if you want to. I have no sword nor gun nor bodyguard. My only weapon against you is love."[3]

If India turns to violence, it will be the crucifixion of Gandhi's soul. Even though he prefers violence to cowardice, he will probably give up the breath of his body resisting the war-method. The force he exerts will continue to be satyagraha, insistence on truth, whole-hearted allegiance to friendliness. And history will vindicate Gandhi in this as it has vindicated the Galilean.

The West for four years conducted a scientific experiment to test whether enemies should or should not be loved. Ten million men were used up in that laboratory test. Jesus and not the generals, it is dawning on some of the survivors, was right after all.

India will probably not go through the false motion of wading

[3] Jawaharlal Nehru told me he doubted the authenticity of this reported incident. Even so, it represents Gandhi's essential spirit.

toward freedom through blood. But even if she does, Gandhi will be claimed by the ages as the embodiment of a more dynamic method than war. He has demonstrated the potency of satyagraha in South Africa and India. Who knows but what the West also—or some nation in the West—may some day apply this technique in place of bombs from the air? Gandhi admits that in 1914 he was neither strong nor disciplined nor experienced enough to make it effective. Today he would presumably rely on soul-force. To Pierre Ceresole, war-resister of Switzerland, he outlined a strategy for resisting invasion:

Refuse all supplies to the invading armies. Re-enact Thermopylae. Build a living wall of men, women, and children and invite the invading armies to walk over your own bodies. If in India, women stood in mass formation, breast forward, without crumpling up; if in Peshawar thousands of men did not shrink from a shower of bullets, imagine what men and women, standing in front of an army wanting a passage through Switzerland, could accomplish! The attacking soldiers might begin to march over the non-violent, non-co-operating wall of human beings. But the invaders could not keep on marching. To the meek at last would come the victory.

If Gandhi did nothing else than imprint indelibly on the consciousness of this generation as he has possibly succeeded in doing, the fact that non-violence is the weapon of the strong and not the weak, his place would be among the highest Himalayan heroes of the race.

But he has made another imperishable contribution. He has shown in his own life the supreme power of prayer. So practised is he in this first necessity of spiritual life that he claims "it is impossible for me not to pray." So sure is he of the value and reality of prayer that, even though everybody else in the world disbelieved in it, he would continue to rest back in "the definite consciousness, at any moment of the day, that we are in God's presence."

On the way home from the Round Table Conference in London, Gandhi voiced his faith that the humble people of the world

are capable and perhaps ready for great acts of suffering and purification in behalf of justice. The weakness is with the leaders.

"Tell us," he was urged, "what qualities you think a leader for this age would need."

"Realization of God every minute of the twenty-four hours."

Then this servant of mankind, who still draws to himself more followers than probably any other living man, specified how the necessary leaders of this age may realize God. They must have complete mastery over themselves, having conquered anger, fear, and falsehood within. They must purify themselves. After that, power will come. Not their own, but God's. "A boy of fifteen," he added, "could fell me with a blow. I am nothing, but I have become detached from fear and desire, so that I know God's power. I tell you, if all the world denied God, I should be His sole witness."[4]

There are many sides to Gandhi. He has the gift of humor. He loves to play with children. At the time of the Round Table Conference, while living three months in the East End slums of London at Kingsley Hall, he revelled in their responsiveness and joy of living, and they reciprocated. With delight they recounted to their mothers their early morning walks and jokes with "Old Gandhi." With Socrates, he looks for beauty in the inward soul; but he also gets an aesthetic thrill from walking barefoot and feeling the dry dust springing up between his toes.

What probably characterizes him most deeply is his attitude toward the Untouchables. As a boy he would smile at his mother when, horrified, she ordered him to bathe and purify himself after he had accidentally rubbed elbows with an outcaste. Again, as a young man he was evidently more amused than angered when the headman of his caste outlawed him because he had eaten with "unclean foreigners." As a middle-aged husband he dragged his wife to the front gate and threatened to push her out on the street because she had shown reluctance in carrying out the pail of a Christian guest whose parents were Untouchables.

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[4] *Entertaining Gandhi.* Muriel Lester. Ivor Nicholson and Watson, London. Pp. 162-163.

Possibly the experience that has vibrated most sympathetically through Gandhi's life was at the mouth of a mine in South Africa. The sun was setting. Hundreds of feet below, the political prisoners were at work. One of them, an Untouchable boy in his teens, came to the surface. There was barbed wire around the mouth of the mine to keep the convicts from escaping; barbed wire and armed policemen.

Suddenly the dark-skinned boy wriggled between the uniformed legs, under the wire, running for dear life. But not to escape. Over to a splash of white, fifty yards away, he ran. It was a gorgeous flower that somehow lifted its shining petals out of the refuse rock thrown up from the mine. The boy buried his nose in the purity and fragrance of that blossom.

Gandhi got to him a second before the policeman. He threw his arms about the boy, saying, "I, too, my brother, am an outcaste. Don't be afraid. I'll protect you."

Turning on the bewildered policeman he said gently, "And you, too, although I hate what you are doing, you, too, are my brother."

Years later Gandhi adopted a little Untouchable girl. Her parents for a time broke bread with the members of his Ashram.

The fire that cannot be quenched in Gandhi's soul is not alone the unity of India and the dream of freedom. It is that the Untouchables may be treated as belonging to the same great family. This has implications for Gandhi's own hands and feet. It means that he must do the same work as the Untouchables who are scavengers. Gandhi, too, must accept the lowliest tasks. And so must those who would have India free; for freedom must begin within.

I remember noting at Tagore's school that even the high-caste boys washed their own dishes, cooked their own food, and did their own room cleaning. Four years before, when Gandhi had visited Shantiniketan in 1915 as an honored guest just emerging into fame, he told the outcaste sweepers for a short period not to carry out the night soil or do any of their other work. It was not long before the stench was painful. The boys were humiliated. Then one morning they saw an unheard-of thing: the great teacher, Gandhi, was carrying on his head a pail that only sweep-

ers carry. Far out into a field he took it, dug a hole and buried the contents. It was a sort of sacrament. They also discovered him cooking his own food, and cleaning up afterwards. Tagore had told them they should do their own work. They had listened politely but that was all. Now, under the stimulus of love walking and lifting among them, they put themselves in the place of the Untouchables. Work that had been shame before, now became a glory.

At any time now Gandhi may die. He has lived to see the British grant great political reforms. One viceroy has written him a friendly letter. The Congress flag is permitted to be displayed on municipal buildings. A new crisis within the ranks of his followers may send him back to one more fast, a fast that with even more implacable pressure, will put upon the conscience of Indians the fate of their Untouchable brothers. Who knows? Only this we know: Gandhi is "secretly armed against all death's endeavor."

He will probably not realize this strange prayer spoken years ago: "If I have to be reborn I should wish to be born an 'Untouchable' so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings, and the affronts levelled at them; in order that I may endeavor to free myself and them from that miserable condition." But whatever awaits this statesman who wears a loin cloth in order that he may more intimately identify himself with the poor, this saint with the deep-smiling brown eyes behind ugly steel spectacles, who is always serene and often laughing—we can guess that his will, which is a will to save, will not die out. In its light, age-old exclusions within his own land are doomed; reverence for personality will find more right of way.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER
At his African hospital

Schweitzer

II

RENDEZVOUS

Mahatma Gandhi is a trained lawyer whose will is like a bullet that sometimes neatly and irresistibly goes through opposing walls. Quite possibly his is the strongest character of any living man, even if he does not seem to understand the machine and is not thoroughly at home with our Western habits and techniques of living.

From Europe, however, there steps an intellectual giant who stands out as an Occidental of the Occidentals. On the pipe organ he wins the applause of the world's ablest critics. You doubtless can hear his records of Bach by making a request to your broadcasting station. He is an expert consultant on organ construction. He can build a hospital, doing some of the most complicated and hardest work with his own hands. He can cut out your appendix accurately. He is sympathy incarnate, yet his intellect is one of the toughest and most sophisticated among the philosophers of East and West. Romain Rolland speaks of him as "the lion who laughs." Some of his books are dogma-shaking if not epoch-making.

As the little "colored" man of India is a super-resister, so this tall, solid son of Alsace is a race-reconciler, an athlete of good will who hurdles with astonishing finesse the barriers between Frenchmen and Germans, Englishmen and Scandinavians, black men and white men, Europe and Africa.

Schweitzer's start in life was totally different from Gandhi's or Kagawa's. Whereas Gandhi as a boy was rather unpromising,

this young Alsatian was early marked as a prodigy. The orphan Kagawa was hated by a bitter foster mother; but Albert enjoyed almost ideal home surroundings; what he calls "a very happy childhood and youth." The father was a minister with liberal tendencies. The church in which he preached was used also by Catholic neighbors; tolerance was in the air. Hour after hour the good pastor would stimulate the child's artistic sense by playing to him on the piano. The mother represented a high tradition of music and culture. Simplicity, self-discipline, and beauty unobtrusively ruled in the home.

The boy had his anxious moments, of course, but they were less about himself and more about his father's poor health and his fellows' poor luck. These two shadows may have sent an occasional chill through the shy but secretly exuberant boy. The usual sense of inferiority scarcely touched him.

He seems to have been curiously free from egotism. Before falling off to sleep the child would offer a silent prayer something like this: "Heavenly Father, protect and bless all things that have breath; guard them from evil and let them sleep in peace." There is no record of his ever having formulated this prayer: "O God, keep me from taking advantage of any living thing"; but, if we may judge by his actions, it was his increasing if not uppermost desire. In a personal letter from Lambarene, French Equatorial Africa, in 1937, he wrote: "As a child, before I was able to read, I found it necessary to pray for all creatures, not only for men."

For all his ambition and skill, he had a boy's healthy terror of priggishness. Once he and another youngster were wrestling. His opponent was bigger but Albert got him down on his back. What excited him was not so much his victory as the lot of the defeated. "If I got broth every day the way you do," cried the boy, out of breath under Albert, "I could throw you down." Here he was, sitting astride a boy who did not have the muscle-building food that the parson's son had been taking for granted. He, Albert, had soup with meat in it twice a week. It wasn't fair! From that time on, broth gave him a sick feeling in the stomach. His parents could not persuade him to wear an overcoat: since his playmates had to go without, so would he! Only

on Sundays would he take off the unbecoming wooden clogs that the poorer boys wore, and put on respectable shoes.

The last place, sometimes, to look for good sportsmanship in a boy is in his relations with teachers. Even here Albert was so considerate that he felt like blushing one day because as pupil he had thoughtlessly exposed his teacher's incompetency. He was taking singing lessons. The teacher, unskilled at the piano, was playing the tune with one finger. Forgetting for a moment to put himself in the other's place, the small boy sat down before the keyboard and showed how the tune ought to be played. Then it struck him that this was showing off his superiority and showing up the other's weakness. He was ashamed.

It was torture to him to see others suffer. All creatures were coming to be recognized as fellow-creatures. Boylike, he struck a dog. For days the animal's pathetic howl haunted his sensitive imagination. Worms on fishhooks squirmed and the shining victims of the fisherman's luck not only gasped pitifully when yanked out of the stream; their mouths were cruelly torn. It was no fun making the poor things suffer. Albert gave up fishing. At an early age he had an experience that apparently has kept tolling like a bell through his mind ever since. He was prowling with a friend. Both had slingshots. Into their blood rushed the unsublimated hunting impulse that calls so relentlessly to all young savages. In a tree a perfect target was perched. The chum adjusted a round pebble, pulled back the elastic, and took aim. The chirping bird was nicely within range. Was he expert enough to hit it? He would try. At the exact moment, however, when he was about to shoot, there rang from the church tower an admonition. It was almost as if the very words that came to Moses on Sinai vibrated in Albert's soul, "Thou shalt not kill." Albert somehow persuaded the other not to shoot. As for himself, he was permanently through with taking the life of feathered friends.

The following story, one of his favorites, about migratory birds who stood by and helped one another in the fundamental struggle to add to the life of the universe he did not hear until years later; but the idea back of it he was working out for himself. In Scotland a flock of wild geese swung down to a lake for a brief rest on

their long migration. A gardener caught one of them and pulled some of the wing feathers out, so that when he let her loose on the lake the goose could not fly. Did the other geese desert their comrade? Not at all! Day after day they would paddle around the helpless one, gesticulating and urging her to try her wings. They would rise from the water persuasively and she would desperately thresh the water with her useless wings. The migratory urge was so nearly irresistible in the flock that they could hardly wait. But they did. Again and again they would cajole the cripple to try and try once more. Then one day the leading gander gave another stirring honk. The flock encouragingly took off. The formerly helpless goose, in whose wings new feathers had been quickly sprouting, faithfully tried her wings, which lifted her from the surface of the lake. As the flock rose she rose with them. Higher in widening circles they climbed above the lake and higher until at last the flock, intact, in a beautiful V, struck out for the long-delayed feeding grounds hundreds of miles beyond.

"Those ethical geese," Schweitzer concludes joyously, "taught that unethical gardener a lesson." Life is too sacred to be suppressed or completely tamed.

The cause of Schweitzer's alertness to help and his growing sense of harmony with all living things, who can tell? His early family life was such, no doubt, as to call out remarkable appreciation and kindliness and the sense of being not an alien but at home with all of life. Allowing for the natural reserve of a healthy boy, one gets the impression of a nature beautifully free from inhibitions and negative complexes. But the three sisters and brother had much the same environment. Why did not they develop his sensitiveness to life, which is as profound and passionate as Gandhi's? There must have been something extraordinarily fine-grained in the child from the beginning. This quality we see shining through his responsiveness to music.

He was born January 14, 1875. Within five years he was studying under his father in front of the old square piano that his maternal grandfather had played. At the age of seven he was surprising his schoolmistresses with tunes on the harmonium. Next

year he tackled the organ, his legs hardly long enough to reach the pedals. By nine he substituted for the regular organist in the church at Münster. He was only eighteen when Widor, the great organist of Paris, was so impressed with the budding genius' ability to interpret Bach on the organ that he gave him free lessons.

Other famous teachers in Paris had a try at him. One of these, a woman, was something of a revolutionist in musical education: she aimed to train his muscles to relax while he was playing, from shoulder to finger-tips. The other was a man who followed traditional methods. Although each music-master had a low opinion of the other, Schweitzer's tact did not fail him. He protected the sensibilities of these two teachers by never letting the one know that he was the pupil of the other. In the morning he would perform perfectly in accordance with the Madame's technique. In the afternoon he would shift gears in the rival's studio and play "a la Philippe." It was not long before he was also practising under the best organists of Berlin.

To attend a Wagner celebration in Bayreuth, to which friends had given him tickets, he did with one meal a day during the trip.

He won a three-hundred-dollar-a-year scholarship. A fellow-student seemed to have more need for the money; so, after enjoying it only a short time, he gave it up in the other's favor and with it a coveted period of study in England.

He had a passion for organs "as other men have a passion for wine." But also for philosophy. His ambition was to grasp what the leading thinkers of ancient and modern times had found out about life. After poring over books all night he would sit down at the organ for a lesson with Widor, unconscious of fatigue.

In his twenty-seventh year he was stealing time from other pressing duties to write a book in French and through it to talk to other musicians about the art of Bach. That book is still the standard biography of the German organist, who to Schweitzer is king among the composers. The author brought home certain neglected facts: Bach was not only a vital, vivid painter in sounds who thought like a violinist; he was also an awakener of the

depths in men. Bach speaks to us out of the tranquillity of a deep inner life.

While interpreting Bach in books and on organs, Schweitzer developed a noteworthy interest in organ construction and in the restoration of old organs. There were features in those mellow instruments of Bach's generation that modern organ-builders should not neglect. Hour after hour he spent urging church boards about to install new organs to utilize the values of the old ones.

More and more was Schweitzer able to demonstrate that an organ rightly constructed and played has in it "an element of eternity." He was gaining the attention of the musical world. Among his many honors was his post as organist of the Bach Society of Paris. Often he was invited to play in Barcelona, Spain. The German Queen frequently but vainly asked him to spend his holidays as her guest. All he would have to do would be to play in her presence two hours a day.

This musical genius was delicately organized. Was he also "temperamental"? Certain incidents point to high nervous excitability. As a child he was so moved by two simple vocal duets about a mill stream and a forest that to keep himself from falling he had to hold on to the wall. When first he heard brass instruments he almost fainted with ecstasy. As late as sixteen he was overpowered by hearing Wagner's "Tannhauser"; it took him days to get back to the routine of schoolbooks. A bridge can be shattered by the rhythm of marching men, and some things could make the nerves of this sensitive youth quiver almost to the breaking point. Almost but not quite. As we shall see, neither imprisonment in France nor the terrific strain of sultry Africa, insects and all, could conquer the essential quietness of his mind that found such happiness in Bach's music.

He had safety valves. The beauty of nature, which made him ache with a passion to re-communicate something of its glory, he could not express to his satisfaction in verse nor on canvas. But his fingers could speak and paint on the keyboard. He shrank at first from letting others suspect the music that was in him. The boyish reserve could even mask itself as indifference and coldness. But this pose did not last long. One day his teacher

criticized him for his wooden playing. The criticism was a challenge; it drew the boy out of his shell. He would show that teacher whether he was stiff and unappreciative! For several days he practised Mendelssohn's "Song Without Words." The next time the teacher listened, he realized he was face to face with a force like a frozen brook at last released by spring. This boy could not only invent accompaniments and improvise tunes. His music could speak from the heart.

Another outlet for the boy's overpowering sense of life, as already intimated, was hard work. The first time that his father took him to school he cried most of the way. But at the age of nine he enjoyed walking alone the two miles to and from the technical school. In the following year he went to live with friends of his father in a neighboring town, where he was under strict discipline. At first he was a little slack and something of a daydreamer, especially in the classes where literature was interpreted by a dry teacher. The school was so little impressed with his performance that he was almost dropped. Then the right kind of a teacher took hold of the bored boy. This teacher's conscience for details and duty stimulated Albert to do such good work that he was able to win self-confidence in the classroom. After a time he had the thrill of mastering subjects such as languages and mathematics, for which he had no special gifts. He got a sense of reality out of science. He came to grips with philosophy. He rose to the top of the class in essay writing. At the age of eighteen he was praised for his knowledge of history.

One of the vital clues to the man would seem to be his curiosity about the past. Always he used it as a tool to understand the present. Aristotle's interest in grasping a problem by tracing it to its historic roots had early become his enthusiasm. Conventional explanations of things did not appease his hunger to probe to the bottom.

Self-expression in music and the discipline of studying the best that had been thought and said in the past helped keep the boy in emotional balance. But perhaps an even greater stabilizing factor was his love of truth. What slowly took hold of Gandhi was with Schweitzer a dominating force from the first. When he

was a child it grew upon him that nothing can be done against truth: the only thing to do is to adjust your life to it. Gandhi tries to do this, but he seems to lack some of the tools of science that are almost second nature with Schweitzer. One does not easily picture the Ph.D. from Strassburg ingeniously arguing, as does the Sage of Sabarmati, that caste is necessary; if your father is a shoemaker then you should be, since man should remain true to his heritage. Schweitzer would know enough about chromosomes to realize that a shoemaker's son might, if properly trained, become a good teacher, banker, or cook. Schweitzer so loves God with his mind that he is one of the least naive of men. From the first, he had a high admiration for sincerity, which he applied to the intricate work of his hands. The making of an organ—was it not "a part of the struggle for truth"?

Always he seems to be haunted by the sense of great heights, of music far up the mountain that mortals never reach. Much of this was associated with the Church. The solemnity and earnestness of the services sharpened his hunger for the infinite. Asked by a Swiss psychoanalyst for an account of his earliest childhood, the middle-aged Schweitzer recalls how as a child he loved congregational singing. The servant girl sitting next to him was apprehensive lest he show insufficient decorum in church; when he sang too loud she would put her hand over his mouth to restrain him.

As an adolescent he wanted to be confirmed. The minister asked him why. Albert could at that time confess with his hands his inmost thoughts, but not with his lips. His answer seemed inadequate. The minister mistook the fifteen-year-old lad's reserve for lack of spiritual interest. It was actually the opposite; to Albert the experience was too deep to entrust to words. In reality, as he later tells us, "I was during those weeks so moved by the holiness of the time that I felt almost ill."

Later, when he was a minister, he came to account it a supreme privilege to share his vision with a congregation through the medium of words. Preaching was "a necessity of his being." But that fact he considered no excuse for talking too much. The result was rather amusing. Some of his parish at Saint Nicholas'

in Strassburg seemed to think they were not getting their money's worth out of the young preacher. So they did what would never occur to a modern flock: they called him up on the carpet for preaching too briefly.

His alibi was convincing: "I am only a poor curate who stops speaking when I find I have nothing more to say about the text."

The matter was patched up by his agreeing to make his sermons last twenty minutes at least.

From childhood he had been more or less conscious of this basic law of all human existence: "He that loseth his life will find it." One bright morning in his twenty-first summer, while the birds were singing, he woke up to find himself facing what this law was to him personally. It meant that for a period of years he would be justified in accumulating scholarship and culture. But the time would come when he would have to serve mankind more directly than by playing the organ or giving lectures or preaching. Then and there, before getting out of bed, he made his rendezvous.

At the moment he could not figure out precisely what the service should be; but by his thirtieth year he, Albert Schweitzer, would be standing ready. When the call came he would drop everything and go. There had been outward happiness before. Now that the decision was made he experienced it within.

For the next few years Schweitzer perfected his organ work and performed in many musical centers. He wrote books in Paris. He gave lectures on Nietzsche; in Berlin his classrooms in theology were filled. He called upon and preached faithfully to his parish in Strassburg.

Those were decisive years. Not because of the achievements that made the musician-theologian-philosopher-preacher famous, but because of the quest of that which no one but Schweitzer dreamed. It was a quest not alone for beauty and truth but, most of all, for a goodness that should find a clean-cut channel where the need was greatest.

Schweitzer had the research spirit. He experimented with various forms of service: poor families, neglected children, ex-convicts. None of these philanthropies gave him the scope he craved. He

had to have activity that was vitally personal and unhampered by red tape—something that would take all of his powers.

By chance one day he saw the statue of a Negro. The uplifted face was eloquent of the yearning and the lack of an underprivileged race. The sculptor's art stretched the young organist's horizon all the way to Africa.

By chance again—only Anatole France may have been right after all, and chance in the last resort is God—a woman with an interest in the suffering black people of Africa laid on the desk of the twenty-nine-year-old professor a green-backed magazine containing an appeal by the President of the Paris Missionary Society for workers in the Gaboon, the northern province of the Congo. The sufferings of the Negroes were desperate. Would not someone say "yes" to the call?

That insignificant-looking publication had dynamite in it. When opened at the right moment, it was going to blow one of Europe's greatest musicians and writers a few miles south of the Equator. During the day Schweitzer's fate lay there on the table, harmless. That evening he picked it up absent-mindedly. He would toss it aside after a glance. The busy eyes took in a few rapidly turned pages. Then they focused on a paragraph that suddenly transformed the problem into a summons.

Sleeping sickness. Painful sores on those black feet. Leprosy. And no doctor to give them relief.

"My search is over," said Schweitzer excitedly to himself. There was no need to read more. He was already headed toward Equatorial Africa.

12

NOT "HEROIC"

The greatest heroes are emphatically not "heroic." They do not make a breach in Jerusalem's walls as Kaiser Wilhelm literally did before the War, and then come dashing in on a white stallion. There is a disappointing quietness about them. When

the band arrives they are elsewhere. It distracts them from the main job, which is thinking things carefully through away in advance.

His thirtieth birthday Schweitzer spent in a matter-of-fact unromantic manner, mapping out his plan. First of all he tested himself. Was he absolutely sure that he wanted to spend the next seven or eight years dissecting dead flesh, memorizing the tedious nomenclature of human bones and organs, buying medicines, and, like a wholesaler, packing them in insect-proof cases? He was! Did he have the wherewithal? He would get it! As if he were building an organ he let no conceivable detail slip him.

It was not until after nine months of checking and counterchecking this and that imagined step that he dropped in a Paris mailbox letters to his parents and best friends announcing his project. He would be studying medicine in a few weeks.

The objections of his friends were as unrealistic as they were amusing.

"Look here, old man, you're a general. Well, generals don't get themselves shot on the front line."

"You want to help the natives of Africa? But if you bury yourself in that forest, you won't be able to lecture here in their behalf."

This last from a nice lady, was a bit too much for the young philosopher. "You recall," he said smilingly, "what Goethe said: 'In the beginning was the Deed!' " But she held on to her belief in words as such and still more words.

The failure of some religious leaders to understand what he was planning struck Schweitzer as tragic. What their cautious advice boiled down to was this: give concerts, lectures, and sermons urging others to lose *their* lives in direct service. Don't throw your gifts away doing it yourself.

They could not see that "the effort to serve the love preached by Jesus may sweep a man into a new course of life."

Other acquaintances cried: "Egotist!" They could not get this man into a bottle with a neat label on it. Others still, because his action was beyond them, were persuaded that he was leaving Germany out of spite or disappointment over not gaining quicker fame. Some would-be analysts had it patly worked out that frus-

trated love was sending a sentimental bachelor to the wilds of Africa. Schweitzer became at last exasperated over the efforts to peer through the shutters into his inner self. It was a relief to find persons looking upon him merely as a precocious young man "whom the calf had kicked in the head."

Actually, this idealist was anything but rash or soft-headed as he mapped out his path. With a scientist's patience he observed in himself the qualities necessary for the venture: ingenuity in practical affairs, horse sense, poise, the body of an ox, drive, a pioneer's willingness to go without comforts. He definitely was not escaping from anything, nor was he aiming at the glory of martyrdom. He was simply seeking to do his share of the atoning work of the world.

The Africans had been exploited by the white man. They had been dragged in chains from their homes, lashed in the cotton fields, and lynched. They had been drugged with the white man's liquor and infected with his diseases. A blood transfusion was required to heal that open sore. He was ready to give some of his.

With the opening of the winter term at the medical school he began. From now on every white corpuscle in his blood was to be taxed to the uttermost, in behalf of those Africans. Only a nervous system with the tough elasticity of an automobile tire could stand what he stood. He was only thirty years old, but these were his tasks. He was a growingly famous organist. There were concerts in such musical centers as Paris and Barcelona. A single performance with the choir sometimes took three days out from his other work. He was a minister, who had to preach frequently although he did not have to preach every Sunday. He could sometimes prepare his sermons on the music trips; but there were also calls to be made, and a hundred things to be done in the Saint Nicholas church. He was principal of the theological college at Strassburg. Although he had resigned this position, he had to continue till the following spring.

He was a lecturer at the university in a subject that required an infinite amount of digging deep into the roots of other men's theories, comparing them and then presenting to some of Germany's most critical theological students a brand-new conclusion that

could withstand their fire. On top of all this, he was now a medical student. This fact at first caused embarrassment to the registrar. Who had ever heard of the head of the theological department and a lecturing professor entering a classroom of the university as a first-year pupil? A compromise quite satisfactory to the new undergraduate was arranged: Herr Schweitzer could study medicine but his colleague professors would not allow him to pay a fee.

These Herculean labors he undertook not with a sense of heroism but dread. He knew it would not be easy when the time of departure came to give up the lecturing, the music, and other rewarding activities in Europe. How costly was the sacrifice may be guessed from this fact: years later, returned from Africa, he could not bear to pass the Strassburg classroom where for years he had revelled in the joy of lecturing before eager minds. It was too painful to recall what he had given up. He assumed that in a few years his gift for music would fade. The prospect of losing his financial independence was not a pleasant one. But all such considerations were as nothing in the light of Africa's overwhelming need. Up the Ogowe River was a great area packed with pain. There was no doctor. To relieve some of the people of their distress was worth these long years of renunciation and preparation.

Schweitzer had set his mind on the Lambarene Mission Station, two hundred miles up the Ogowe River. One reason was sentiment. It was an article by the Director of the Mission that was partly responsible for his decision to fling his life into medical work. The "irony" was that this Director, who had made such a stirring prayer for "men and women who can reply simply to the Master's call, 'Lord, I am coming,' " was a little horrified at the answer. There he stood, a giant of a man, brilliant, dedicated, ready to undergo the most exhaustive training in behalf of Monsieur Boegner's natives. But he was unorthodox, explained the kindly Director, who doubted the advisability of sending a representative to serve the black people equipped only with medical skill and Christian love. He must also have the correct Christian beliefs. However, the candidate had many years in which to train

himself. Perhaps the objectors could be won over. Schweitzer did not throw up his hands in disgust. He was determined in a quiet but persistent spirit to grapple with this issue until there should be a decision in the open. The question as he saw it was not whether his creed was adequate. The question was whether a missionary society was privileged to turn down an applicant for service with his qualifications. He did not ask for the right to preach. He was quite glad for a period of years to "work without having to talk." All he asked for was the chance to save fellow human beings from a portion of their physical agony and thus manifest to them the love of Christ.

Eventually, at the end of his apprenticeship in medicine, the apprehensive board accepted him, with this unconsciously humorous stipulation: the doctor must be "mute as a fish." Good enough! He was willing to close his mouth. His hands might not be able to talk on the organ down there by the Equator, but they could express something of the mystery and majesty of life through the tender tying-on of bandages and the expert use of surgical instruments. He could try Christianity without words.

The work of the medical student became almost unbelievably strenuous. John S. Gutleben, now a resident of Alameda, California, Schweitzer's cousin who shared a room with him one semester at Strassburg, says that he can still hear Schweitzer's voice ringing out over the dinner table with laughter and can still see him at his study desk with his feet in a basin of cold water to keep him awake as he studied at midnight. He would sometimes work all night, and the janitor would not have to make his bed in the morning. His habit was to study until ten and then write until two. The next morning he would get up at eight, seeming to get along on six hours of sleep. That was when Schweitzer was twenty-five years old, and the tasks were fewer. The work was far more taxing now. Before his first year was over he was free from the principalship of the theological college; but to compensate for that financial loss he had to give extra concerts. His lecturing and preaching continued. He was, as usual, producing books.

One of these was an essay on organ building. Twenty years

after its appearance, it was still a standard book, and a guide for the organ reform movement.

The Quest of the Historical Jesus, which appeared in 1906, is probably his masterpiece. The last chapter was written during his first year of anatomy. The medical studies gave him a direct contact with reality that refreshed him. For years he had been manipulating philosophical theories on a basis that rested too tenuously in the mind. Now his hands were touching *things.* The experience of such reality, instead of stultifying him, quickened his imagination. There was a kind of intoxication in the rigors of the laboratory, where you had to back up a generalization with facts and truth had to be tested with accurate eyes. But for all that the strain was almost too much for even Schweitzer's practised composure.

During his fourth year of medical work, still supplemented with an incredible number of other activities, he reached what he later admitted was a "fatigue crisis," about the worst in his life. Examinations loomed. But this student had become so captivated with pure science that he had been neglecting the text-book work necessary for good marks. A last he joined a cramming club and made up for lost time by specializing on the most likely examination questions. He got through with colors more or less flying. It must have been an almost superhuman effort.

In the midst of his exacting labors Schweitzer could take time off to be kind. In the same house where for a time he roomed, there lived a music-loving elderly lady, who was shut off from the world outside. To her Schweitzer used to play an hour nearly every evening. He even let her make him promise he would never go out in Africa bareheaded after sundown! Her uncle, it seemed, had never come down with malaria although he had served for years in tropical Africa. His good health she naively attributed to his habit of protecting his scalp from the night air. Schweitzer was well aware of the absurdity of this prescription against fever. But to please the old lady and honor her memory he entered into the agreement. Of course he stuck to it. Curiously enough, he never came down with malaria! Nor has the night helmet made him bald!

Six years after entering medical school he took the state medical examination. To cover the fee he played the organ part of a symphony written and conducted by his old teacher and organ master, Widor of Paris. Other concerts and royalties from books had met most of his simple living expenses. A week before the Christmas of 1911 he stepped out of the hospital, under the stars, half-dreaming. He could hardly believe that the medical course was behind and no longer ahead of him. Over and over there came to him as he walked the grateful realization that he had a body that could stand the six years of almost unbelievable strain.

In less than two years he would be attacking sleeping sickness and healing festering ulcers up the Ogowe River. He would be reducing the agony of the world. He would be playing "one music as before, only vaster." Meanwhile he had to write his doctorate, do his year of interneship, and assemble his hospital equipment.

The subject that he chose for his paper was a neglected aspect of the mind of Jesus. Certain European psychologists had questioned his sanity. He would go to the roots of that matter. It was really a continuation of his other researches. Binet-Sanglé and others were reading their ignorance of Jesus' thought-world into his emotional life. He would expose the falsity of their hypothesis from the bottom up. His published findings are still valuable.

Within a few months in the spring of 1912, he had given up his preaching and professorial position. It was like cutting out a part of his body. In the summer of 1912, at the age of thirty-seven, he married Helen Bresslau, the daughter of a German historian. She had helped him with his manuscripts and proof reading. In Africa she would work beside him as a nurse. A few weeks of special study of tropical medicine awaited him in Paris before sailing. He would have to do some begging among friends and concert work on the organ for the expenses of his expedition to Africa; but intellectual work would now give way to practical affairs.

The shift appealed to him. To run a household and a hospital on the edge of the primeval forest was no small achievement. He would attack the task thoroughly. It was not long before he was

an expert at buying, invoicing, and boxing a thousand and one essentials and odds and ends that would either be thought of in time while he was in Europe or be missing in Africa. So practised did he become in making out lists that he finally came to enjoy arranging the items in artistic order; here was a new source of aesthetic satisfaction!

His enterprise was to be in a French colony. That did not prevent his German faculty friends from contributing generously. He himself was a German subject. The Bach choir of Paris gave him an evening's offering for the good work.

The hard-headedness of this Ph.D., M.D., organist, and author of many varied and famous books suggests itself in his precautions about taking gold with him for the next two years. His wife thought it a waste of energy to turn paper into gold and burden himself with heavy coins. Schweitzer had sufficient political sense to suspect that war might break out before he could return to Europe, in which event paper money would be of little value. For years he had given earnest effort to bring France and Germany together. He had written the biography of Bach in French. It had attracted the French public until a demand was made by the Germans that it appear in their own language. Instead of leaving this task to a translator, Schweitzer set out to do the job himself. Not keeping to the original text he ended up by showing the German publisher a manuscript almost twice as long as the original. Back and forth between the two countries he had been weaving the sanity of music that he hoped would help prevent the madness of war. But he was no sentimentalist. Although he hoped white, he saw black—or at least dark gray.

On Good Friday, nearly a year and a half before his worst fears for Europe were realized, Dr. and Mrs. Schweitzer pulled out of the little town of Gunsbach, where his father lived. The church bells were ringing in their ears. Were these bells solemnly repeating the command that once overpowered a small boy aiming a slingshot, the command "Thou shalt not kill"? If so, the grown man could have answered, "I know not where Europe is headed. But I am on my way to Africa to aid and not to destroy life."

13

RACE RECONCILER

EUROPE was wealthy with skills and techniques for relieving pain and dispelling ignorance. Africa was devoid of privilege. The white man, thinking only of himself, giving not a thought for the poor man at the gate, was Dives. The black man, suffering without medical care or sympathy, was Lazarus. The two had to be brought together. There must be an at-one-ment.

This would cost something. But somebody had to pay the price of European exploitation of the native people of Africa, who had been bled for so many years that now they were pathetically weak. In compensation and contrition for this evil done, strong white men would have to pour out energy in behalf of these helpless black brothers. That was why Schweitzer, with his wife, was sailing for the dark continent, to where its wounds had been most cruelly neglected. As a white man he would help to make atonement. He would serve as reconciler.

One of his first acts in Africa was not bringing whites and blacks together, but reconciling natives to the fact that they would have to treat their animals better. It was in the steeply sloping harbor city of Dakar. Two Negroes were beating a horse in the street. The cart that the horse was straining to pull was stuck. Although the load on the cart was heavy, the men remained on top of it, shouting and pounding away at the poor beast. Schweitzer could not stand such callousness. He compelled the two men to come down off their perch and help him. Silently and apparently in awe over the strangeness of the thing they did, together the three men and the horse pushed and pulled and pulled until the creaking vehicle moved.

A fellow passenger who was also an army officer later remonstrated with the doctor. "If you can't stand the sight of animals being punished that way," he said, "you'd better not go to Africa. You'll see plenty of that kind of brutality here."

Schweitzer's eyes from then on became accustomed to horror

far more crushing than that, but never did his spirit take it for granted.

But there was beauty in Africa with which his spirit could agree. From the shallow-draft steam-boat that took him the two hundred miles upstream to the Lambarene station, his eyes rested upon a skyline of palms and pinelike trees that crowded close to the wide river's brim. Monkey chattered unto monkey in the branches. Fish eagles lifted their wings above the green papyrus leaves. You could almost detect from the splash of hippos a rainbow in the bright African sun. The Ogowe was really a system of rivers, in some places broadening to a lake and then narrowing again to a mile or less in width. Past the boats the trunks of great trees floated. Canoes made of hollowed logs were passed. The flashing oars and rippling ebony muscles of the standing oarsmen kept a rhythm that was here before any white man had so much as heard of the Ogowe's virgin forest.

When Schweitzer landed at the Lambarene mission station, where he was to stay two years, he quickly swallowed his scruples about taking insect life and set to work to rid his little bungalow of spiders and flying cockroaches. It was thatched and stood on piles. Here was simplicity—and from now on service as pulsing and raw as any man could desire. The black people who wanted medical attention were soon swarming upon him.

A corrugated iron building had been promised for a hospital, but there were no laborers to put it up. The forest doctor began treating his patients in the open air. The hot sun no doubt had its antiseptic virtues. It was also fatiguing and dangerous. One slap of actinic rays on the back of the neck—and another white man would get shipped home with a headache he never dreamed that Africa could produce.

There must be a suitable roof somewhere. The enterprising doctor located one. It was an abandoned chicken coop. He covered some of the dirt with whitewash and installed an old camp bed. There was no window. It was stuffy. The roof was so full of holes that he continued wearing his sun helmet. But he considered himself lucky; this was his counselling room.

Soon the doctor and his wife, along with Joseph, the colored

interpreter and assistant, were plying their instruments. Joseph had been a cook. His medical vocabulary was highly flavored with his kitchen experience.

"This man's right leg of mutton," he would inform the doctor, "hurts him." A woman, it seemed, had a pain in what he called her cutlet.

The interpreter carefully tells the patients what to do with the medicine the doctor prescribes. Out of sight they are as likely as not to suck the ointment or swallow the compound all at once.

It was not long before Dr. Schweitzer became known for hundreds of miles as "Oganga," the fetishman. He was known to have dangerous powers. Therefore, the strategy was never if possible to let anybody die. In such an event the people along the Ogowe would infer and propagandize that he did it maliciously. Perhaps he was hungry and the patient was fat enough. What proof is there that this white man is not a cannibal?

Nevertheless, he treats thirty or forty patients a day. There is no cancer nor appendicitis, but no end of malaria, heart complaints, leprosy, tropical dysentery, elephantiasis, skin diseases, sleeping sickness, and the itch. By good luck not one mistake has to be buried under ground that first year. The doctor is becoming famous among cannibals and lumbermen even as he was among musicians and theologians. His hours at the clinic or operating-shed are from eight-thirty in the morning till twelve-thirty; then from two until six. At noon after lunch he plays the piano.

That tropical piano with its pedal attachment throws light on Schweitzer's personality. Out of love and honor for their organist the Paris Bach society sent the instrument down to Africa with him. One day a huge canoe hollowed out of a giant log glided into the little Lambarene dock. More than a dozen half naked black men were standing in it, paddling. When they landed, they and a swarm of porters with the help of poles and ropes carried the strange zinc-lined box up to the doctor's hut. It was insect-proof.

The doctor was stirred by the kindness of his European friends in attempting thus to keep him in touch with his world. But for a time he had scarcely the heart to try the keys. Had he not

renounced his old art for a greater? It would be easier to forget the renunciation if he used his fingers only as a physician. At last however, something in him answered the waiting strings; before long he was memorizing whole compositions of Bach, Widor, Mendelssohn, and Franck, and perfecting not only finger movements but interpretations. The piano built for the tropics had become an organ resounding in a Paris cathedral. Because he practised on it every day and took infinite pains with his playing, he was able to return to civilization perhaps an even more accomplished musician than when he left.

Another improvement was a two-room corrugated iron hospital. At last it arrived, and the fowl house was abandoned. A few weeks later a waiting room and dormitory each about forty feet long made of unhewn logs and raffia leaves were erected. Along with this addition the problems increased. The servants, of course, were unreliable. Everything had to be locked up. Otherwise, as Joseph said, "it would go for a walk." One day from his bookshelf in the bungalow a copy of Bach's Passion Music containing Schweitzer's own valuable handwritten notes thus bade him good-bye. The doctor described himself as "a walking bunch of keys."

Gratitude is almost as rare as an aggravated appendix, but once in a while it appears. One patient went about among his relatives until he had collected from them the surprising sum of four dollars "to pay the doctor for the expensive thread with which he sewed up my belly." The uncle of a boy whom he had cured made some useful cupboards from old boxes. Mrs. Schweitzer received a hippo's hide. The doctor did not believe in pampering his patients. They should give something in return for his services if it was only a dozen eggs or bananas, or a chicken. By thus giving they would value the hospital more. This conception it was difficult for the real savages to grasp. Upon being dismissed as cured these patients would demand a present from the doctor! Wasn't he their generous friend?

How the doctor and his wife managed on their hospital budget of about three thousand dollars a year is a mystery. By the time

anything arrived from Europe it had cost nearly three times the original price in the home country.

There were many things to excite curiosity and even terror. Two hippos followed a canoe in which Schweitzer's black paddlers were panic-stricken. It was a fascinating spectacle in the moonlight watching the huge black heads a few yards away keeping up with the log canoe. The doctor had formerly operated on the broken thigh of a Negro whose canoe had been upset by hippos. He could understand, as he heard the huge river horses roar and fuss, why the natives paddle far out of their way to avoid them even in daylight.

Then there were the cannibals. The French government were very strict on this matter. But the natives were secretive. The doctor, however, had a fair idea of what had happened to a certain fellow who went to a village to collect a debt and was never heard of again. He had at least been tasted.

Nor was slavery entirely a thing of the past. Noticing an attendant of some patient at the hospital who quite evidently was of a different tribe, Schweitzer would ask whether he was a slave.

"Oh, no," would come the suave answer with a peculiar smile, "this man—he's just a servant."

Could these people think independently or, Schweitzer often asked himself, were they so conventional and tied to tradition that their brains could not work like a European's? His conviction was that they were far more philosophical than white critics give them credit for being. They were concerned over fundamental questions of good and evil, of conscience and the meaning of life. Having arrived at this conclusion, the former principal of a theological college and the author of important books on the subject had the shock of finding himself patronized intellectually. The white missionaries, not bothering about the ban against his speaking on religious subjects, invited him at a synod meeting to give his opinion on a point in dispute. A native preacher objected. After all, what could the white doctor know about such things? "He is not a theologian as we are."

His black friends may not always appreciate him. Schweitzer always values them. The quinine or bromide of potassium may

be months late and the patients hopeless procrastinators, but he is instant in his sympathy. "Just to see the joy of those who are plagued with sores, when these have been cleanly bandaged up and they no longer have to drag their poor, bleeding feet through the mud, makes it worth while to work here."

Here is a technique of race reconciliation that goes home to the heart. We see it most vividly in the old chicken shed. The leaky roof lets the sun through the coffee bushes. The doctor, his face showing perspiration under the pith helmet, comforts the black man who has been brought in moaning.

"Don't be afraid. You'll soon have a sleep. Then when you wake up you'll begin to be better."

At the head of the operating table stands his wife, the partner who somehow gets an infinite number of household and hospital duties done, but always tranquilly.

The operation over, the patient wakes up. He keeps repeating "there's no pain. No pain!" Schweitzer takes the black man's hand in his. Then he tells him why he has come to work among the Negroes. It is because he obeys a Master who once went about healing the sick and giving comfort to all in trouble. He is able to carry on this work here because white friends in Europe are generous. They send money and medicine. The doctor grips even more firmly the sick man's hand. Like an organ chord there sounds deep within him the words of Jesus: "And all ye are brethren."

There was financial backing for the first two years. The schedule had been to stay on in Africa that length of time and then return for a few months to Europe for a money-raising expedition. Before the second dry season was over a pistol shot in Sarajevo crashed that plan. Early in August the doctor was a prisoner of the French government.

The authorities permitted him to stay in his bungalow; there could be no communication, however, with either white or black people. This fitted in with Schweitzer's spiritual need. For a long time now he had been itching for the leisure to write. Within a few hours after being put under the care of Negro guards he began another book, not about music or New Testament criticism

but about the basis of civilization in general. The literary work was soon interrupted by the demands of the people for medical attention. His captors had to give in, army regulations notwithstanding, and allow those whose ulcers or fever were most painful their opportunity for treatment.

For more than two more years he remained in Africa technically a prisoner of war. But the discipline, until he was sent by ship to France, was slack. During a rainy season the doctor and his wife lived in a hut on the coast. Mrs. Schweitzer's health required a less taxing atmosphere. Here were woods and river water as at Lambarene, but also the crisp white line of the surf, and there was a different kind of challenge for the muscles. While the tide was coming in the big Alsatian would help the Negro laborers roll two- and three-ton logs up the beach.

Schweitzer's philosophy is that, no matter how mechanical or repressive or futile his situation, a man may find an opportunity to express his humanity. The war might slam doors shut. He could still prick the dark here and there with light.

The natives of course were right. If the white people enjoyed eating the dead on their battlefields, there might be some point to their killing one another on such a large scale. But the whole business in Europe looked a little silly. In Africa, if you were fighting in a war and killed a fellow on the other side, your tribe would have to pay his tribe whatever he was worth. "But those ten white men who used to be on the Ogowe and who got killed in battle, who is going to pay for them?" asked the perplexed blacks. "Why don't the tribes of those white men meet to talk out the palaver?"

Schweitzer was called in to no white man's palaver. He could not reach the ear of the high and mighty while the madness was on, but "without words" he could touch a chord of understanding in the lowly.

A black mother one sunset was silently crying, seated on a rock by the river's bank, her red eyes fixed on something distant, downstream. The kindly doctor knew what the trouble was. The army had taken her son. They had him on the vessel that had left an hour ago. Her son might not return. She probably

would never see him again. A white man's war was different. It was not like the tribal fights, when hardly anybody was hurt; and anyway the tribe brought your boy's body back to you.

The helpless white man tried to comfort the broken-hearted woman. Words were of no use. Beside her on the rock he sat, taking her hand. The tears filled his eyes, too. Together they sat silently, and watched where the smoke of the departing river boat had darkened the red sky.

14

AGAINST CHAOS AND JUNGLE

In the fall of 1917 Dr. and Mrs. Schweitzer were themselves shipped away as prisoners of war, to France. Before sailing he packed away in a corrugated iron building his household and hospital goods. The manuscript on civilization into which he had poured two years of hard thinking was entrusted to an American missionary who happened to be working in the Lambarene station at that time. The man from across the Atlantic was not exactly radical in his reflections. He considered such writings as Schweitzer's to be spiritually dangerous. To the author he intimated that it would be better for his soul if then and there he cast the whole packet into the river.

France was an ordeal. In the prison camps dysentery cruelly sapped the doctor's energy and enthusiasm. The food was not what it might have been. Chaos was in the air. The nerves of the interned about him were cracking. His study of psychiatry enabled him to recognize the symptoms in others, but did not make him adequate to the task of keeping a few prisoners sane in an insane world. Schweitzer maintained his poise by taking advantage of the opportunity to write and think things through as Gandhi and Kagawa did during their periods of confinement. He also practised on "the organ."

The fingerboard for that imaginary organ was a simple table made by a fellow prisoner. The floor served as pedals for foot practice.

In the story of that table we sense how impossible it was, even during a war, to keep Schweitzer's usefulness hermetically sealed in Africa. While he was still at Lambarene he gave to a prisoner a generous supply of emetic, quinine, and pain-killing potions, with carefully written descriptions how to use these medicines. Somehow these drugs were not confiscated. Now, in a prison camp, a woman was becoming increasingly ill. She heard of a fellow prisoner who had come all the way from Africa with a consignment of pills. Schweitzer's old acquaintance let her try some of them and the woman recovered! Her husband was eager to show his appreciation. When he discovered in the same prison camp the original cause of his wife's restored health, he set about to do some service for the doctor. He had been a carpenter. The doctor, he knew, wanted a table on which to write and practise the organ. In an attic the grateful man "found" the necessary wood.

Some gypsies came to him with the question: "Are you the Albert Schweitzer written up by Romain Rolland in his *Musiciens d'Aujourd'hui?*" To honor the organist of the Bach Society of Paris they serenaded him with stringed instruments.

For a while he was the only doctor. Later he was allowed to add preaching to his activities. He had brought with him a French translation of Aristotle, but there was more to learn from Greek commercial travellers on the spot, Turkish farmers, German furnace-makers or factory builders or bankers, whose brains Albert Schweitzer, Ph.D., enjoyed picking.

Then at times he was held by the snow-patched peaks of the Pyrenees shining above the prison walls.

In the summer the Schweitzers as exchange prisoners were returned to Germany. At one station, where they were overloaded with baggage and unable to get a porter, they could hardly make their way over the rough stones in their path. The sun was bitterly hot. A cripple whom the doctor had treated hobbled up and gave all the assistance that he could. In memory of that thoughtfulness Dr. Schweitzer now always looks at stations for anyone needing a hand. Once a passenger getting off a train with a lot

of baggage, to whom he offered help, refused it, suspecting that he might be a robber pretending to be friendly.

The suffering that they encountered in the home country was tragic. Deprivation and despair had driven an old, admired professor to take his life. The little boyhood town of Gunsbach was within range of the French guns. To get to his father, who refused to leave his church study or pastoral work even when the shell fragments ripped through the trees, Schweitzer (with a gas mask) had to walk nearly ten miles between sandbags and straw walls.

His own body was in disrepair. The surgical operation necessary to bring him back to health was a severe one. The sufferings endured in Germany were sharp enough to qualify him once and for all as a member of the "Fellowship of Those Who Bear the Mark of Pain."

The mayor of Strassburg gave him work as a doctor in the city hospital. A post was made for him as curate in his beloved Saint Nicholas' church. It was not, however, till Archbishop Söderblom invited him to lecture in the Scandinavian countries in the spring of 1920 that he was made to feel freely at home again in the world of thought and art.

His only outstanding performance on the organ had been in Spain, before a second operation had weakened him. When he arrived at the University of Upsala he was low in spirit. The chaos of the world had almost penetrated his soul. It must have been with diffidence that he began his series on ethics and world religion. Then the genius of this giant's mind flashed with the old fire. During the closing lecture he was so moved by the insight and sympathy possessing him that for a few moments he could scarcely speak.

The clouds were beginning to lift. The heavy debts could be paid with lectures and concerts such as he was giving in Sweden. The brisk air and cordiality of his reception gave him a fresh start. He had thought of settling down, perhaps as a teacher, in Switzerland. But now his mind was made up: he would return to Lambarene.

Returning to Germany, he wrote at the request of a Swedish

publishing house, an account of his adventures which in English is known as, *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest.* This book is not only an epic of one man's heroic attack upon pain; it is also an indictment of the white imperialism, which forces the labor of the Negro and over-taxes him. For its brevity of style the author thanks the publishers, who allowed only a certain number of words; for its clarity he might thank his Negro interpreter at Lambarene, who could handle only one sentence at a time and that a simple one.

Surprising opportunities opened up. During the next two or three years he often lectured in centers of culture such as Zurich, where he received an honorary doctorate. Citizens of many lands had been stirred by these lectures, and had offered contributions to his work in Africa. His new book, *Civilization and Ethics,* would finance it for a few months. On the organ at Westminster Abbey he played before an enthusiastic audience. There was something in this Bach-lover's music, something of composure and peace, that made former enemies want to forget their hectic hatreds and remember only the spirit that holds men together. Here was an organist whose performance was genuinely an act of worship, whose music would help to heal the world.

His art and philosophy had much to say to a Europe still in chaos. But his will was in Africa. He would attack the jungle there. Meanwhile, he would walk to his work whenever he could; ride third-class; carry his own luggage; eat in cheap restaurants; and wear simple, inexpensive clothing. Every possible cent had to be saved.

In the early spring of 1924, with four potato sacks filled with unanswered letters, together with a young Oxford student of chemistry as helper, he was Africa-bound on a cargo boat. Mrs. Schweitzer had to stay behind because of broken health; and with her, their daughter, Rene.

The day before Easter he was surveying what remained of the hospital that had taken him four and a half years to build. The doctor had schooled himself to be unshockable. What confronted him was a shock nevertheless. Just as blind nationalism had conquered Europe, so an always greedy jungle was swallowing

Lambarene. He had been absent only seven years but the wild grasses and hungry creepers, the inevitable dry rot, and the imperialistic ants had wasted no time. What had not been eaten away from one building of corrugated iron, although its roof of palm leaves had been chewed or blown to pieces, still stood. A large bamboo hut leered like a skeleton. The bungalow, rotten and leaky, had no path leading to it; just a tangle of undergrowth surrounded it.

A timber-boom had absorbed practically all the labor power of the vicinity. This was a venture for younger blood. He was forty-nine years old. What matter? In the mornings he could be a doctor. Through the hot afternoons he would be a builder.

To get the twenty-five sleeping-sickness patients and the same number of lepers and all the others properly housed was no simple task. To keep them from dying of chills caused by rain through the leaky roof, there had to be better bamboo rafters, very hard to procure; and, most important of all, tiles made of raffia leaves. To get the raffia leaves required superhuman diplomacy. In a neighboring village the doctor solemnly declared he would never again treat another sick person from that place unless they brought him a certain number of these leaves. The villagers took the threat as a good joke on the part of "our doctor." Not a finger did they lift. A chief's old-fashioned gun exploded on him while he was hunting wild pig. He was grateful for the medical treatment at Lambarene. Under heavy pressure he promised to have his servants bring in one hundred and fifty of these precious leaves from the forest. The reason for this generosity was that the doctor told him he would not dress his wounds for three days unless the gift was forthcoming. The chief cannot live without attention. He promises five hundred. The leaves, however, never materialize.

The love and patience of Schweitzer, like the love of God, shine through in a "Nevertheless." In spite of the lack of co-operation, he continues to think kindly of the chief: "He is in his own way a fine man."

Children come into the hospital, under reconstruction, suffering from terrible sores. He has brought with him a new kind of

wonderful tablet which, ten days after swallowing, will make them entirely well. But first, won't they persuade their fathers and uncles to bring in some raffia leaves for the roof? If they don't, . . . ! This doctor is one of the kindest men who ever dressed the sores of youngsters. He would not think of refusing them aid. But he almost enjoys putting a scare into the lazy relatives.

First thing in the morning he seizes one of them who has come in with a child from the village, to sponge for a week it may be on the doctor's hospitality. Into the reluctant hands a bush knife is thrust. Supplementing threats with flattery and offers of trinkets, the master-builder may thus wangle a little labor out of this and that "volunteer." He is lucky if from the five or six who help him cut down the underbrush that day he retrieves all the tools he has lent them.

The jungle against which Schweitzer was pitting all of his powers was not merely a matter of over-aggressive trees and undergrowth. It was also the inertia in man. The physical jungle was almost enough to exhaust him. Since a famine was on, and an epidemic of dysentery, more and more of the encroaching forest had to be cut down and better buildings erected. A new doctor coming from Europe with two nurses relieved him of some of the professional work; and two recently acquired motorboats lessened his burden. It was necessary, now that the old hospital was rebuilt, to erect another on piles two miles up stream. The one hundred and fifty patients who had to be provided for, every night, needed more room.

Having already put in more than a year as contractor and builder, Schweitzer set out for another year or two to cut down trees, push the forest back, and turn his blueprints into corrugated iron buildings. While he was working as overseer and manual laborer he heard from the University of Prague that they had given him another honorary degree. The "Old Doctor," as his black workers affectionately called him, was too tired to care. At night he had not the energy to write. All he could do was to keep up his practice on the piano, and work the pedal attachments as if it were an organ.

By 1927 he had the thrill of seeing patients transferred to the new buildings, two miles up the river, and the mental cases from behind their mosquito nets expressing their gratitude over such comfort. It was the generosity and friendship of Maude Royden's congregation in London that had made their dry, roomy ward possible. There was an isolation ward for the dysentery cases. Schweitzer at last could accommodate two hundred ailing black people and their attendants. His hospital was open to all sufferers. If he could not save them from death, he could "show them love, and perhaps make their end easier." In their behalf he had endured tortures of flesh and mind about which his lips are sealed. We know that the sun coming in through the roof where the thatch was out of repair brought him down with severe headaches, and that overwork made his heart almost give out.

At last he was able to return to Europe for his second trip from Africa. By the autumn of 1927 he was raising money in Denmark and Sweden. Toward the close of 1929, he was on his way back again, this time with his wife and two other helpers. While traveling up the Ogowe River he put the finishing touches on his scholarly study of the Apostle Paul, over which he had been brooding since youth.

For a few months again in 1930 he made another sally to Europe. As long as his strength lasts he may go back and forth, always Africa-bound. Or, he may some day settle down in his boyhood town of Gunsbach. The lecture and concert tours he now gives are not merely to finance the project for black sufferers. Schweitzer is as eager as ever to do what he can for world peace by pointing out the absolute necessity of a renaissance throughout the West. There has to be a new point of view. For himself, he will fling into the black surrounding despair of the post-war generation an undismayed "faith in a new humanity"; faith "like a burning firebrand."

He says there must come a philosophy "profounder and more living than our own, and endowed with greater spiritual and ethical force. In this terrible period through which mankind is passing, from the East and from the West, we must all keep a look-out for the coming of this more perfect and more peaceful

form of thought which will conquer the hearts of individuals and compel whole peoples to acknowledge its sway."[1]

His mind is with Europe's Renaissance. His heart is with the Africans. He admits to being seized by an unspeakable sense of fellow-suffering for the poor strangers brought in for his attention. "How often the sympathy is quite hopeless, since it is evident at the first glance that the visitor will draw his last breath here, far away from his own people, who are waiting for his return and for the money that he ought to bring with him."

Despair over the poorest and most frequent visitors or guests he turns into kindly irony: "If a Benjabi appears of his own accord each morning for his bandaging or his injection or to get his medicine, and does not run away because his turn does not come at once; if when the horn sounds for rations he does not wait more than half an hour before appearing with his plate; if he throws all refuse in its proper place; if he does not steal fowls from the missionary nor let the latter catch him plundering his fruit trees or his banana plants; if at cleaning up time on Saturday afternoons he helps without too much outcry; if when the lot falls upon him and his condition allows it, he jumps into the canoe ready to paddle it; if when there are cases and sacks of rice to be unloaded, he lends a hand, even if fate had willed that he has first to be routed out from behind his cooking-pot as fit for the job—anyone who does these things and a few others like them, passes with us for a virtuous and rational being in whom we gladly overlook many short-comings in other directions."[2]

In one of Schweitzer's sermons[3] to the blacks we see vividly, in almost incredible detail, the forgiving patience he believes in and practises. Imagine a small crowd of woolly headed, slightly dressed people sitting in the shade between two hospital buildings, on a Sunday morning. A goat joins the congregation, then thinks better of it. Monkeys chatter in the coffee bushes. Two or three

[1] From Preface of *Indian Thought and Its Development.* Albert Schweitzer. Holt.

[2] *The Forest Hospital at Lambarene.* Albert Schweitzer. Holt. Pp. 74-75.

[3] *Christian Century,* March 18, 1931, p. 375.

listeners cook their rice while the Doctor talks to them. A fisherman mends his nets. A mother washes her baby's hair. One lolling native lays his head comfortably in the lap of a second. The second man sits up and, with skilled fingers and a joyous preoccupation, hunts among his friend's hair for lice. The text is Jesus' saying about the necessity of forgiving a man seven times seven. The Doctor of Theology drives the lesson home with a ruthless reiteration. The cries of weaver birds force him to raise his voice. A translator on the left puts the sentence in the Benjabi language; another translator on the right makes it intelligible to the Pahouins:

"Suppose you go outside of your hut in the morning, and a bad man calls you names. Because Jesus said 'forgive,' you hold your tongue and resist the temptation to palaver. Later in the morning a goat belonging to your neighbor eats some of your bananas. He ought not to let his goat run loose that way. You tell him that he ought to give you as many bananas from his tree as his goat stole. But you do not get angry when he pretends it was somebody else's goat. A few hours later a man brings you the money for ten bunches of bananas you gave him to sell for you. He hands you the money for nine. You point out his mistake. He says it really was only nine. The word 'Liar!' almost flies from your lips; but you remember that there are lies of your own about which God only knows and that if he is to forgive you, you must forgive this man. Again, you start to build a fire. The wood is gone, the wood that you had meant to last a whole week. You have a good idea who took it but you forgive him. When afternoon comes you look for your bushknife to work on your little farm. In its place is an old useless one, and you recognize who the owner of it is. You begin to feel happy as if it had been a wonderful day. Why? Because you have forgiven already four times.

"That is only a beginning. After sunset you want to fish. You can't. Somebody stole your torch. You clench your hands. You cry, 'Haven't I stood enough for one day?' You plan to hide for the thief and punish him. Then you decide instead to let Jesus rule in your heart, so you borrow a torch from a neighbor. But at the river bank you find another man has gone off with your

boat. This, you say to yourself, is too much. You will catch him when he returns and what won't you do to him? However, as you crouch in the darkness behind a tree, Jesus again comes into your heart. When the man comes paddling back at dawn you go up to him with your hands outstretched. You don't even ask him for some of those fish.

"You go home congratulating yourself. That's pretty good, you say proudly, forgiving that way seven times in twenty-four hours. If the Lord Jesus, however, came to your village that morning, would he flatter you? No, he would say as he said to another fisherman 'seven *times* seven.'"

Thus does one of Europe's profoundest scholars make himself simple in the service of love. Like Gandhi, he embodies humility. But his humor seems never to fail him as he throws himself against chaos and jungle.

One day, on the incessant quest for volunteers he called to a Negro in a white suit who had been doing nothing at the hospital but sit around, "Hello there, friend! Won't you lend us a hand and help us with this plank?"

"I am an intellectual," came the dignified reply, "and I don't drag wood about."

"You're lucky," answered Schweitzer amiably, "I too wanted to become an intellectual, but I didn't succeed."

15

CREATIVE PERPLEXITY

THE MIND of the Alsatian who "also wanted to become an intellectual" is not easy to appraise. The people with whom he worked adored his courage, gaiety, and tenderness; but they vastly underrated his mental grasp.

Some Benjabis had been using water infected probably with dysentery and in general scandalously disobeying his hospital regulations. The Doctor was dead tired of having to be a disciplinarian. Into a chair he sank groaning, "What a blockhead I was to come out here to doctor savages like these!"

"Yes, Doctor," agreed his native first assistant, "here on earth you are a great blockhead, but not in heaven."

The fact is that Schweitzer, in addition to being the greatest living interpreter of Bach, one of the world's most accomplished organists, a competent consultant on organ building, a labor manager and a first-rate physician and surgeon, is also one of the intellectual trail-blazers of this century. He is anything but uninformed. His researches have to be reckoned with the world over by philosophers and theologians. Gandhi could learn from his analysis of Hindu thought, contained in his *Indian Thought and its Development.* Kagawa has had one of Schweitzer's books translated into Japanese.

We cannot understand him at all unless we see him as a man embodying ideas. These ideas he has painfully worked out for himself. Let us face some of them, beginning with his leading one.

While he was in the forest a call came for Schweitzer to come with all haste to a distant mission station to treat a sick missionary. The only transportation available was a small boat trailing a barge of lumber, operated by Negroes. He had no time to bring food with him; they let him share theirs.

On the barge he occupied himself scribbling notes over some sheets of paper that he happened to bring along, desperately working through his mind for a clue to the solution of a problem that had been perplexing him for a long time. The tantalizing question was this: "What is the basis of true civilization?" Since the second day of his internment, that question had been his chief intellectual concern.

If there was to be civilization there had also to be progress. In other words, there had to be on the part of the West the welcoming acceptance of the world instead of the timid escape from it attempted by Hindu philosophy. But what sanction in the universe was there for such world-affirmation? When we say "yes" to the challenge to improve conditions and change society are we deceiving ourselves? Or is there deep in the world-heart of things a justification for our effort? Schweitzer was like a man

leaning against an iron door that would not yield, no matter how importunate was his questioning, his hammering upon it.

It was the third day. The sun was setting. They were making their way through a herd of hippopotami. Sitting on the barge, Schweitzer, completely absorbed in puzzlement, kept on "struggling to find the elementary and universal conception of the ethical which I had not discovered in any philosophy."

Perhaps those huge grotesque floating beasts of the river, the sun flashing upon their teeth as they yawned before diving, touched off a frustrated sense of reality in the philosopher. A splash or a snort may have done the trick. Anyway, there leaped into the seeker's mind a phrase that suddenly solved the problem of years—"Reverence for life."

Here was the idea that would root world-affirmation and ethics firmly in thought. "The most immediate fact of man's consciousness is the assertion: 'I am life which wills to live, in the midst of life which wills to live,' and it is as will-to-live in the midst of will-to-live that man conceives himself during every moment that he spends in meditating on himself and the world around him. . . . The man who has become a thinking being feels a compulsion to give every will-to-live the same reverence for life that he gives to his own. He experiences that other life in his own. He accepts as being good: to preserve life, to promote life, to raise to its highest value life which is capable of development; and [he accepts] as being evil: to destroy life, to injure life, to repress life which is capable of development. This is the absolute, fundamental principle of the moral and it is a necessity of thought."[1]

So whole-heartedly did Schweitzer incarnate this idea that he was led to seeming extremes in action. A famous Englishman tells of a hasty walk he and Schweitzer were taking along an English country lane toward a railway station. Between them they were carrying Schweitzer's big haversack slung on his walking stick. There was no time to lose on account of Schweitzer's appointment in the city and the approaching train. Suddenly

[1] *Albert Schweitzer, Out of My Life and Thought.* An autobiography. Translated by C. T. Campion. Holt. Pp. 186-188.

the Englishman was swung around along with the haversack. The big Alsatian had abruptly stopped. In the middle of the road was a worm that someone might crush underfoot. He had noticed it. In spite of his hurry, he picked it up tenderly and placed it by the side of the road out of danger.

One of his most rewarding experiences in Africa occurred when a savage, who quite possibly had once savored human flesh, showed similar chivalry. The Doctor and the savage were cutting underbrush, with a small gang of blacks. One of them, seeing a toad, was about to cut it in two for fun. The savage interfered. Then he explained to his fellow-Africans that God had made all animals and they were related to human beings. "Some day the Great Father will hold a great palaver and those who have hurt any of his creatures will be sorry."

In one of his expositions on ethics Schweitzer goes so far as to say an ethical man "shatters no ice crystal that sparkles in the sun, tears no leaf from its tree, breaks off no flower, and is careful not to crush any insect as he walks. If he works by lamplight on a summer evening, he prefers to keep the window shut and to breathe stifling air, rather than to see insect after insect fall on his table with singed wings."[2] That demand he himself fulfils as best he may. His ethical system is based on what goes deeper than the rational, but he is less irrational in the application of that ultimate demand of ethics than such statements would seem to indicate. He is troubled by the necessity of destroying even the infinitesimal bits of life that spread sleeping sickness, which he examines almost with a sense of pathos on the glass plate of his microscope. Yet he destroys them as thoroughly as he possibly can. He feels sorry for the young fish hawk that he rescues from native boys about to kill it and he decides to let it live even at the expense of the fish he will have to feed it. He says that he never carries a gun, not even on travels: "In the grounds of my hospital all the animals live in peace and nobody is going hunting. Unfortunately we must kill snakes, because there are among them very dangerous venomous snakes."

[2] *Civilization and Ethics.* Albert Schweitzer. Translated by C. T. Campion. Macmillan. P. 254.

Gandhi lately has given the impression that he considers it almost as wicked to kill goats at Kali temple in Calcutta as to shun Untouchables. Whether Gandhi actually sentimentalizes to that extent or not, Schweitzer never would. Although he does not think that the universe was made for man, he does attach a peculiarly Christian reverence to personality.

The following paragraph of philosophy is poetry. It may also be uncommon common sense:

"Only an infinitesimal part of infinite being can ever be affected by personality. All the rest floats past me utterly indifferent to my existence, like far-away ships to which I make futile signals. But in giving myself for the sake of that which comes to my tiny circle of influence, and which has need of my help, I realize the inner spiritual self-surrender to eternal being and thus lend meaning and richness to my own poor existence. The river has rejoined the ocean."[3]

In the light of that ideal he is puzzled over the occasional necessity to hurt non-human living things. He will help any living thing he can to get free of pain. But, paradoxical as this may sound, he brings a lot of healthy horse-sense to the task. This trait he amusingly exhibited when he decided to farm out an orphan monkey that came into his possession at Lambarene. Several prospective mother monkeys cast wistful eyes upon the orphan. Like a personnel director, he checked over their traits and qualifications and finally let a likely looking candidate hop off ecstatically with the youngster in her arms.

For all his passion for Nature, Schweitzer has no illusions about her. About Nature's glories he does not twitter. With him Nature is no substitute for God. His secretary writes: "Albert Schweitzer finds God better in his heart than in Nature. God in Nature remains enigmatical to Schweitzer."

The place primarily to find God is in the will-to-promote-life. Philosophy must be based on that will, not the other way around. "God reveals Himself to me," says Kagawa, "only when I will to

[3] *Ibid.*

love." That sentence may be unconsciously borrowed from Schweitzer. It is certainly close to the heart of his final thinking.

There is in his mind a bracing determination not to be smug, not to rest back on any conclusion or attitude too comfortably. "An easy conscience," he keeps on insisting, "is an invention of the devil." To keep his integrity, a man must be always probing, as Thoreau recommended, "to find where the main roots run." It is the restless, unceasing probing that impresses me most about this mind. When dealing with it I cannot get out of my imagination one of the millennia-old big trees of the California Sierras, which are forever reaching out through their roots for wider, richer contacts. It is thus that their life sap flows so irresistibly, and it is thus that Schweitzer's mind grows. Whether in the thought of following generations he will survive like a sequoia gigantea, one can only guess. The branches of the man unquestionably reach a great altitude, and he holds out with amazing grit against tests as cruel as the forest fires that almost cook the sap of the undiscouraged giant redwoods. His creative puzzlement is part of his will to live, his will to revere others' will-to-live.

There are gaps in his writings that might call for criticism. It is difficult to discover from his many volumes whether Albert Schweitzer is or is not an absolute war-resister. A man's relation to the war-system is one of the most important issues of this generation. It is quite strange that this thinker should be so silent about it. Quite possibly his months as a war-prisoner, in which he was compelled to write only what would pass the censors, may account for his reticence. In his Hibbert lectures, given at Oxford in 1934, he declares that religion today has lost much of its power to command because during the war "it joined forces with the spirit of the world." But that is not an explicit declaration of independence against the munitions-makers and the war-system.

In a letter in which he comments on the foregoing paragraph he writes: "Naturally I am against war. War means brutality and stupidity. That I am against war is shown in my idea of reverence for life. While I spread that Idea, I fight against war in the deepest way."

Again, he seems to dodge specifically stating whether he is or

is not for collective ownership of basic industries. Where does this philosopher stand politically? Here is no escapist, no perfectionist in an individualistic ivory tower. He is against the imperialism that rides on the back of the black man. He hints at the rotten foundations of nationalism. But what, concretely, has he to say about a program to socialize the life of man?

In answer to this query he writes: "I represent no political program. But I think that the highest good of men is freedom and that too much socialization wrongs the individual spiritually and materially. The dignity of man, of the individual, is the important thing." The herd ethics of white ants are out. Right!

But Schweitzer may be carrying his sense of individuality to an extreme. Friends in France even intimate that at times some of his colleagues in Africa have found him a little arbitrary, a little dictatorial. In spite of his passionate sense of solidarity with all of life, he is relatively aloof from the large-scale collective pressures necessary to secure social justice. This detachment may be weakness instead of strength on the great philosopher's part. Should not the conscience that refuses to be used as gun-fodder or grist in some totalitarian mill at the same time with equal vigor, work for a planned society in which production shall more and more accurately meet human need?

Whatever the answer to that immediate issue may be, Schweitzer gives the impression that he considers *this* to be his chief intellectual task: to take up a problem after the manner of Aristotle and show it unfolding from the beginning. Here is one of the secrets of his power: always he tracks down origins; always he gets at his finger-tips the history back of the thing under consideration. Then, from a wide perspective, he throws new light upon it.

He does not, for example, stop with Bach. He goes back to the structure of organs old and new. The whole subject before him he studies from top to bottom. Thus Widor, asking his brilliant pupil about certain riddles in Bach, was astonished to hear the young Albert instantly translating from German into French the text that had inspired Bach's seeming eccentricities in composition. He knew it was either wind that Bach was trying to capture on the organ or it was the sound of running waters. He had memo-

rized the source material. The Master of Paris organists had not bothered to do more, and that was one reason why certain enigmas to Widor were clear as day to Schweitzer, who did bother. "Widor did not know enough German to understand the text of the old Lutheran hymns. That is why he could not solve the riddles. But I knew these texts," Schweitzer writes.

Once in England Schweitzer told an American who was translating for him that to play Bach properly a man has first to find "composure and peace in life." One suspects that his thorough scholarship has added to his confidence and poise, and consequently to his power of interpreting Bach.

Instead of simply covering the usual ground and repeating the same high-sounding complicated interpretations of Kant, while a student not yet of age he set out to expose how irreconcilable some of Kant's basic philosophical presuppositions are with certain of his stated religious beliefs. The religious beliefs of Kant, the professors had carelessly assumed, were logical conclusions from his philosophical presuppositions. Young Albert shows that they do not follow logically at all. He suspects that they really spring from something much deeper and stronger than a philosopher's fine-spun theories, and that is the will-to-live. For years he ponders and puzzles. At last his "creative perplexity" bears fruit. To a middle-aged man, surrounded by primeval forest and splashing hippos, the source of a valid philosophy reveals itself. It is in the will. The will-to-live. It springs up from reverence for this same will-to-live in all of life. The rational has to base itself frankly on the deeper than rational.

Which brings us to Schweitzer's amazing book about Jesus that startled the theological world when he was only thirty-one. He seems to make Jesus intelligible at the cost of making him unintelligent. He pictures Jesus taking for granted that the world is going to come soon to a dramatic end or change. Does Jesus not tell his disciples in the twenty-third verse of the tenth chapter of Matthew that before they return from their journey announcing the Kingdom of God to the villages of Galilee, it will already have arrived?

But it did not arrive. The divine earthquake did not occur. In

this particular expectation, Schweitzer says in substance, Jesus was mistaken. But it was only an opinion, a theory. He accepted the thought-world of His time, which took such a catastrophic upheaval for granted. Look at the events and choices of Jesus' life in the light of this new clue and what before was baffling now becomes simple. Thus the author of *The Quest of the Historical Jesus.*

What started Schweitzer off on this radical interpretation, which predecessors had hinted at but which he focused into a burning point in the theological consciousness of the world, was his intellectual restlessness while a nineteen-year-old conscript in the German army. In his haversack he carried a Greek Testament. The conventional interpretation of his professor did not satisfy him. It was all very well for Dr. Holtzmann to say that the puzzling passages in the tenth chapter of Matthew were read into the gospel by a prejudiced early church. Supposing Jesus actually did say what the professor ruled out? It would be interesting to pursue this possibility the way a big game hunter goes after a moose.

For year after year Schweitzer relentlessly kept to his quest. In the throes of writing out his conclusions more than ten years later he divided a huge pile of books all over the floor: if Wrede had said anything suitable to chapter one, he reposed in that corner; if Smith was relevant to chapter two, he could stay in that heap back of the closet door. There must have been a confusing number of heaps for the servant to pass by under pledge not to touch a volume or a sheet of paper on the floor, no matter how dusty. Visitors were invited to mind their feet as they made their way through this labyrinth.

Was Schweitzer right in his attitude toward Jesus? With his intellect, perhaps no. With his will, unquestionably yes.

He declares: "Jesus had no program. He preached love and waited for the coming of the Kingdom of God. See my book on *The Quest of the Historical Jesus,* where I analyze how Jesus came to the idea that his death was necessary for the coming of the Kingdom of God."

My own suspicion is that Jesus was much keener than we of the nationalistic-capitalistic world imagine. He saw where we senti-

mentalize. The way he grappled with Rome and poverty illustrates his intellectual penetration, his political and economic realism. On the Mount of Temptation he decided once and for all, apparently, to use a method in dealing with the invader somewhat similar to that of Gandhi's non-violent coercion. In any case, Jesus went the second mile with the enemy and died forgiving his crucifiers, never attempting to lead the Zealots against them. As for the exploited poor, why was he killed less than a week after exposing and without bloodshed attacking the vested interests in the Temple? Was it because he talked generalities? More than likely it was because his program of helping the oppressed had too definite, too sharp a cutting edge. Schweitzer does not seem to recognize the mental strength of Jesus as applied to these two issues of Roman soldiers and undernourished widows. Perhaps Jesus was more *intellectually* right than our age suspects.

However that may be, Schweitzer shows his own intelligence by giving his will to Jesus as Lord. What matters, he says, is not the theories about him but the commitment with which we obey him. If ever there was a committed intellectual, it is this doctor of theology who renounces his college principalship and chair, his comfort and pride, to follow his Master without reservations no matter what the cost. If he cannot accept either the religion *of* Jesus or the religion *about* Jesus he will search in his own will for religion *from* Jesus.

He may be a pessimist at the surface of his mind. At the bottom of his soul he is an optimist, because of this relationship with Jesus. In the light of loyalty to the dynamic Jesus he can unflinchingly "stand from fear set free . . . to hold a hand uplifted over hate." He can match the cruelty of the world with the triumphant compassion of Christ. Even if Jesus was mistaken in that conventional expectation about the world's sudden ending, in his will to go to the cross we can find our peace. Schweitzer does not use those words. But his life reveals that faith. And in the last paragraph of his *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* he breaks through his reserve to say this:

"He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old by the lake-side He came to those men who knew Him not. He

speaks to us the same word: 'Follow thou me!' and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience Who He is."[4]

Is it not true also of Schweitzer that we can know him only as we share his sense of the agony and redemption of the world?

[4] *The Quest of the Historical Jesus.* Albert Schweitzer. Translated by William Montgomery. Second edition. Macmillan.

Common Ground

The Gambler Magnificent, the Super-Resister, and the Race-Reconciler are paradoxes, each in his own way. Kagawa praises science, but sometimes he generalizes too easily. Gandhi, worshipping Truth, snubs the findings of many a laboratory. Schweitzer reveres all living things; yet he expects little of Nature.

What interests us is not the unique inconsistencies nor bristling differences. What interests us is the characteristics that make them one. If we can discover their basic similarities, we shall have invaluable clues as to how we ourselves may live. Where, then, do we find their common ground?

On the third level of life!

Every person has a choice of three levels on which to live. He can be childish, ego-centric, and soft in mind, fondly imagining that the world revolves around his small desires. The cruelty and injustice from which others suffer cause him no pang: "Why should I go forth to battle in their behalf?" If such a one ventures outside the warm comfortable nest, it is only to dash feverishly over the surface of things. He may seem to be whole-hearted and free; actually he is irresponsible and naive. That is the lowest level.

Against this shallow innocence those on the second level energetically rebel. Some go fascist; others go communist or Pharisee. For the sake of future order or brotherhood, let there be violence now. That the Kingdom of Heaven may come according to my specifications, away with anybody who chooses a method different from that of my party.

Doesn't the end justify the means? These second-levelers make an impressive show. But peace they can find neither within nor without, and they are almost wrecking the world. Like all adolescents, they are not really sure of themselves. As a result, they make

an issue of their maturity; or overemphatically protest their realism; or solemnly look down upon everybody else.

On the third level move those athletes of the spirit who are fundamentally effective and aware. The fascists call them "communist"; the communists call them "social fascist"; the Pharisees dismiss them as "sinners." Level number three is always patronized by level number two as though it were only level number one. The communist brushes Kagawa aside as a peddler of religious opium; the sword-fondling nationalist labels Gandhi as a sentimentalist who only turns the other cheek; the half-baked intellectual mutters that Schweitzer is a fool for leaving the popular lecture room to bury himself in Africa. Yet Kagawa, Gandhi, and Schweitzer are more poignantly aware of ultimate reality than inhibited atheists are. They cherish a deeper attachment to native land than arrogant nationalists can feel. They have a wider grasp of philosophy, by being brotherly, than the inhibited intellectuals in their ivory towers ever reach.

Those who have climbed to the second level are preoccupied with their growing pains. The gaiety and gusto of the great souls are literally over their heads. They see no point in sitting at the feet of children. But Kagawa, Gandhi, and Schweitzer do. Put either one in the presence of youngsters and in five minutes they will all be having a jolly and probably hilarious time. Theirs is the gift of making others feel at home because they are themselves at ease with life. Imagine yourself meeting the chubby Japanese in that funny black, unpressed suit he wears in Tokyo; or the half-naked Hindu after evening prayers in an outcaste village; or the stout-bodied Alsatian in full dress emerging from a concert in Paris. At first you might feel embarrassed in the presence of fame. But only for a moment. You would soon be thinking of more important things than the impression you were making. Before long they would be sharing with you a sense of power that is overcoming the world. And you yourself would be laughing with them.

These three have humor not because they have escaped but because they have embraced the sufferings of the underprivileged and the tasks of social change. They are free and spontaneous

because they are conscripts of a terrible compassion. They are not insensitive to evil. Indeed, they can tell you far more about it than can those who are of as well as in the world. But the evil has no power to crush or sour them. They see *through* the intervening ugliness to something just and lovely beyond.

What they see does not strike them dumb. They are amazingly articulate. Kagawa bubbles over untiringly through microphones, newspapers, magazines, and books. Gandhi addresses vast crowds, issues innumerable articles, and writes one of the most self-revealing autobiographies. Schweitzer forcefully lectures, preaches, and interprets civilization to itself and himself to the world.

Do their hands produce so much because their hearts are serene? Or is their tranquillity the result of their creativity? Neither is the final cause of the other. Both these qualities are the reward of that most important of all human acts—commitment. These three live for and by something infinitely higher than themselves.

Not every moment, but oftener than we, they breathe and dream in union with the deepest law of human life. It is a law that Jesus proclaimed again and again and embodied all the time: If any man tries to defend himself he will be lost, but if he throws all of himself into the cause of the Family of God he will find his soul.

Stirred by three great trumpeters of God, whose lives are in harmony with this fundamental law, we gain fresh direction and hope for our own.

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